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*** Comment on Present Serious Czech-Slovak Tensions**

*** Czech Change of Approach**

93CH0543A Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 20 Mar 93 p 8

[Editorial by Karel Kriz: "Klaus Changes Course"]

[Text] Negotiating with the present Slovak Government requires a considerable dose of patience on the part of anyone so engaged. All the more so on the part of the Czech Government, toward which Vladimir Meciar exhibits particularly little respect, for certain reasons. The formal reason for the current serious split is Slovak unwillingness to deal seriously with the division of property and to sign agreements that would confirm the future settlement of Czech claims in Slovakia that are running in the area of 43 billion korunas [Kc]. That is why the Czech side has now blocked the issuance of securities of Czech enterprises to Slovak coupon investors—until such time as the resolution of Slovak debts is clear. However, a more concentrated look betrays the fact that, this time, much more is at stake. What is involved is the future character of Czech-Slovak relations or whether any relationship will exist at all.

Tomas Jezek presented evidence of his disorientation in this regard in a most peculiar manner when he stated, "For the price of peace, I would not hesitate to write off the outstanding debts in Slovakia." Irrespective of whether he had political or economic peace in mind, he took the one-time Pithart policy concept and its argumentation to absurd levels. There is no more reliable road toward enmity than this one.

All claims tend to have the disagreeable characteristic of never ending if they do not encounter resistance. Quite the contrary. Past unpaid debts naturally give rise to new debts and, in the end, lead to a halt in trade and make past claims into still more egregious ones.

Truthfully stated, the policy Vaclav Klaus pursued with respect to the Slovak Government in the second half of last year was highly inclined toward this very concept. It was a policy of superior generosity, full of good-natured gestures on the part of the richer and happier successor of the divided state. It involved an effort to abstain from trivia, to not prolong disputes, to not argue about trifles—irrespective of whether they were real or alleged. Despite the fact that the logic of this approach was bound to show its bad side—sooner rather than later—the goal was absolutely legitimate: to rapidly terminate negotiations regarding controversial questions, to preserve good relationships and the maximum amount of trade, and to concentrate on economic transformation, upon heading toward membership in the European Community—in short, concentrating on the future.

Vaclav Klaus committed an "insensitive" mistake by identifying the strategic needs of the Czech Republic for stability in the region with the persona of Vladimir Meciar and linking this requirement to Meciar's support.

What all has occurred between Klaus and Meciar over the past six weeks (since the separation of the currency) and what has taken place in the head of the Czech prime minister during that period can only be the subject of speculation. In any event, a turnaround has occurred in his contemplation regarding Czech-Slovak relations. If, speaking as recently as 30 January at the World Economic Forum in Davos, he literally said, "We are the guardians of the principles of a free market and of democracy. It is absolutely out of the question for us not to give Slovak citizens their share," he must have been gathering strength for the current turnaround for quite some time. And if, in the end, he decided to change course on his own—and not as a result of pressure from ministers or other political forces, but actually as a result of his own decision—and temporarily stop the issuance of stock certificates, this difficult decision was surely made against the background of recognizing the substantially more difficult consequences involved in continuing existing policies.

Although the change of course occurred at 1155 hours, it nevertheless came. That must be valued. It is worth more; more is at stake.

*** Slovak Indebtedness**

93CH0543B Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 2 Apr 93 p 16

[Editorial by Karel Kriz: "A Revision of Outstanding Debt"]

[Text] The visit to Prague by the Slovak president, no matter how bilaterally affable, obliging and reconciliatory it may have been, was unable to dispel fears based on the future development of Czech-Slovak relations. Prime Minister Meciar as well as ministers Toth and Kubecka actually clearly confirmed their destructive course on the occasion of the discussions regarding the division of property, which took place in recent days. Unfortunately, the solution to everything else depends on the solution of this question. It is nothing new for the Czech Government, and particularly for its prime minister, to have hoped for a relatively long time that the generous approach by the Czech Republic to the division of property will result in economic as well as political peace, in addition to contributing to the rapid breakup of the state. The Czech Republic Government would probably be willing to go substantially still further in pursuing this strategy, provided the blind alley represented by this approach did not have such a warning ending—precisely the opposite from the situation it was possible to hope for in the fall. When yesterday's gift has turned today into an already arrogantly extended hand, palm up, and when yesterday's benevolence was followed immediately by tough negotiations regarding the content of his own (Czech) pocket, Vaclav Klaus put on the brakes. According to political logic, it is not possible to anticipate anything other than one of two evils: submission or conflict.

The Slovak Government has long been urgently working on leading property settlement into a blind alley. The clear and lucid language of numbers is being relativized, and the ordinary observer is being disoriented. Who owes whom

how much and for what? A fog is beginning to descend. It is therefore most urgently necessary to undertake a review.

Let us overlook the money pipeline that functioned for 70 years because the powers that be in Prague were maintaining it in an operational mode more or less voluntarily on the basis of considerations that these subsidies would strengthen the state. Let us disregard any considerations regarding what could be possibly considered to be Slovakia, economically as well as territorially, before the development of the first republic and what can be considered to be Slovakia today. Let us even forget the generous 2:1 ratio of the division.

There is something else at stake now. First: the proper settlement of the balance of the former Czechoslovak Central Bank (SBCS). Slovakia owes 24.7 billion Czech korunas [Kc] to this facility, money that was created in Czech commercial banks and that was redesignated for the purpose of providing credits for Slovak enterprises by way of obligatory SBCS reserves. Money that had been saved in the Czech Republic was thus utilized in Slovakia. Second, it is a matter of settling the difference in property values pertaining to property acquired by Czech and Slovak coupon investors residing in the other republic. Investors with a permanent residence or, rather, an address in Slovakia acquired property in the Czech Republic worth Kc19 billion more in nominal value than was the case for Czech residents. In July 1992, through its Minister Dolgos, the Slovak

Government publicly promised that settlement would be made but denied having made those commitments when the first wave of privatization came to an end. Third, in December 1992, the Slovak Government deliberately withheld part of the sales tax from the common budget. This amount comes to Kc2-3 billion. Fourth, the Slovak share in common foreign debts dating back to the time of the federation, for which the Czechoslovak Bank of Commerce accepted responsibility, amounts to approximately \$2 billion—in other words, about Kc55 billion. The Czech Republic has no guarantees that Slovakia will share in paying off these debts. Fifth, mutual indebtedness exists between enterprises in the Czech Republic and those in the Slovak Republic, indebtedness that dates back to before currency separation and that, according to analyses, shows a sizable deficit on the Slovak side. This block of old outstanding debts has been confirmed but is clearly getting to be outside of the angle of vision as it applies to the Slovak Government and to Slovak enterprises.

Understandably, the Czech Republic cannot receive payment immediately and is not even striving toward this end. However, the Slovak side must confirm its obligations and must agree upon a method and a schedule for repayment. If we do not achieve that, any mutual economic peace and correct political relationships are an illusion that will have been lost in advance.

Zhulali Reports on Visit to NATO Headquarters

93P20135A Tirana RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE in
Albanian 2 Apr 93 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Minister of Defense Safet Zhulali by the Albanian Telegraph Agency, ATA; place and date not given: "Albania—Active Restorer of Order in the Balkans"]

[Text] [ATA] You were in Brussels recently heading a high-level military delegation. What is the purpose of this visit to NATO?

[Zhulali] At the invitation of the secretary general of NATO, Manfred Woerner, we went to Brussels to participate in the meeting of defense ministers of the member countries of NATO and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council which examined the possibility for strengthening cooperation between NATO and its partners, the results achieved up to now in this cooperation, and the possibilities for its further expansion in the future. At this meeting, the situation in our region was also examined, and it was stressed that all efforts would be made to prevent a conflict in the south.

[ATA] What is NATO's commitment to Albania and what kind of progress has been made in this direction?

[Zhulali] After the end of the cold war, as we know, strong political and military confrontation gave way to dialogue. In connection with this, a constructive dialogue has begun in the area of defense. Now it is a matter of a partnership between countries which are not NATO members and NATO member countries. This partnership began about a year ago and is being developed with considerable success. As a result, the cooperation between NATO and the countries of the former Warsaw Pact has increased. This NATO meeting was quite extensive; it was an especially important meeting. Our country was represented for the first time. It was a great honor for us. I think that our participation in this conference is of special importance. We have close cooperation with NATO. I now believe that this cooperation will produce results and will be elevated to a higher level. We know that, at present, NATO is not admitting any new members. This decision was made at a time when we did not have these options before the European countries. I think that this is an outmoded concept. The majority of the participating delegations which wanted to become NATO members expressed the same opinion.

Our country has asked for this [NATO membership]. What attracted NATO was the fact that Albania is playing a key role in the Balkans and is restoring order to the Balkans. Albania's policy kept the conflict from spreading in the south and kept our region from being included in the war in the Balkans and perhaps beyond. This serious policy on the part of Albania, its commitment to the resolution of the problems of the negotiations, has been well received by NATO and NATO has considered Albania to be a serious partner. We got a warm reception, which gave us the greatest sense of security at this time.

[ATA] Albania has said that it will not allow ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. How would you comment on this from the military point of view?

[Zhulali] At the present time, Albanians in Kosovo and in other parts of the former Yugoslavia are threatened by Serbian terror and violence. They have demonstrated extraordinary maturity and patience, which have their limits. But if the terror and reprisals continue and if Milosevic's aim is to carry out ethnic cleansing, we cannot permit this, we cannot allow Albanians to be chased from their age-old lands. Under these conditions, Albania will exert all its efforts so as not to allow this.

[ATA] You gave a speech at the NATO meeting. Can you tell us some of the issues you treated?

[Zhulali] In my speech, I gave a presentation on the defense policy of Albania. In the beginning, I stressed the results of the reform in our country and in the army, which have received high praise, as perhaps the best reforms in all the Eastern European countries. I spoke about our principles of defense, based on cooperation with our neighbors, with democratic states, and cooperation with NATO and the United States. I also emphasized that the basic aim of our defense policy is the integration of Albania into NATO as rapidly as possible, after Albania satisfies the conditions to become a full member of NATO, and, at the same time, I stressed that this would be in the interest of NATO and of Albania, as well as beneficial to the strengthening of international security and peace in the region.

At the same time, I spoke about the tension-filled events in the region, about the danger of the eruption of the conflict in the south. I spoke about the anxieties and expressed the concern of the Democratic government and our opinions in regard to the solution of the problem of Kosovo which disturbs all the countries of the Balkans. At the same time, I stressed something which the president of the Republic of Albania has said—that recognition as soon as possible by the international community and acceleration of the procedures for the recognition of Macedonia is in the interest of peace in the region.

[ATA] What can you tell us about the final statement in connection with the situation in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia?

[Zhulali] Of course, the meeting ended with a statement. It should be stressed that it was issued on the basis of a consensus. It expressed anxiety about the events in Bosnia and the activity of the community to solve the problems through negotiations and to force Serbia to sign the peace document. On this point, all were of the same opinion, and they simultaneously expressed their commitment to the prevention of a conflict which would take the lives of innocent individuals.

[ATA] During your stay in Brussels you had meetings with NATO high officials. Can you tell us more about the content of these meetings?

[Zhulali] The bilateral meetings with NATO officials and other colleagues were of special importance. Among the

most important meetings, I would like to cite the one with NATO Secretary General Woerner, who stressed, once again, that he was pleased with his visit to Albania and that he would do all he could to help Albania. As he emphasized, his visit had a good effect and it gave a clear signal that they would not allow Albania's security to be violated. At the same time, he told me that he has clearly stated to all NATO ambassadors that they should help Albania in matters related to defense and the restructuring of the military.

I met with the head of the NATO military committee, Mr. Vincent, on some special issues. I had other meetings with colleagues. The most important one was with the American representative. The meeting lasted about an hour. They expressed their support for our defense policy, for the realistic attitude of Albania and for the role which Albania is playing for peace in our region. We know that an American team is working with our General Staff, providing technical assistance. I would also like to stress that the most important speech at the NATO meeting was that of the American representative who raised a number of issues

related to security in general and peacekeeping. But one of the things which attracted more attention was the opinion of the Americans about the expansion of the alliance. In addition to the roads of cooperation among armies, it presented the idea of the further expansion of NATO. Understandably, this was a signal which was well received by Albania, which, undoubtedly, would occupy one of the top places if the Alliance were to be expanded, and this is encouraging for us.

I had meetings with the Italian minister of defense, Salvo Ando, during which the date of my visit to Italy was set for 21 April. I also met with the minister of defense of Turkey, Nevzat Ajaz, at which time the close relations between our two countries and armies were confirmed. I had brief meetings with the defense ministers of Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, and Bulgaria, and with other high officials of NATO. Mutual desire for cooperation was expressed in all these meetings.

Thank you very much!

*** Vaclav Havel's View of Sudeten Transfer**

93CH0539A Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 3 Apr 93
pp 1, 3

[Article by Prof. Vojtech Mencl: "History Cannot Be Admonished—The Reasons for the Decision by the Allies To Accomplish the Expatriation Were Different From Those Listed by V. Havel"]

[Text] *In his 29 March 1993 briefing, President V. Havel once more returned to the postwar expatriation of Germans. Starting out with the proposition that neither the state nor civic society can be established on the basis of lies or prejudices, and stating that the health of our self-awareness even demands that we return to the past, he characterized the "forcible expatriation of millions of people on the basis of a purely national principle" as being a "morally deficient action."*

I agree that coming to terms critically with our past failures is undoubtedly necessary. However, such settlement must be based on complete and open historic truths, and those truths must in turn be based on the knowledge that it is impossible to artificially create any kind of abstract standard that could be used to evaluate historical events and their meanings by applying the yardsticks of the present.

On the basis of everything V. Havel has said or written on the question of the expatriation, I have the ever-clearer feeling that he is demonstrating an inclination to boss history about. I will therefore attempt to make a few critical remarks regarding some of the views he expressed at the above-mentioned briefing.

The Will of the Allies Was Decisive

From the Havel speech, it is evident that the expatriation was the result primarily of our—Czechoslovak—decision, which was subsequently "confirmed by the victorious powers." Was that actually so?

It is certain that that idea came into being within our resistance movement shortly after the Heydrich era and that Benes accepted it and asserted it after some hesitation. But it could not be implemented until after the three victorious powers gave their approval at the Potsdam Conference. The reason was simple. Without their approval, it was not even possible to transport the expatriated Germans across the border or settle them satisfactorily in the individual occupation zones the Allies controlled fully. Therefore, the question of why Western statesmen gave their approval is of key significance: It forms the core of the problem. Existing literature on the topic (for example, the writings of N.V. Hughes and others) normally lists three fundamental reasons for their decision. The first was their effort to eliminate future possible nationalistic minority conflicts, which had facilitated the preparations for and the unleashing of both world wars in Bosnia, in the Sudeten area, and in Gdansk. The second reason was that they had arrived at the understanding that, in support of future peace, it would be prudent to allow for a territorial curtailment of the amount of German territory under Great Power dimension, which, in the end, gave rise to their approval to having the Polish

border run along the Oder-Neisse Line. But they knew that, if they left some 12 million Germans behind that line, it would destabilize both the Czechoslovak and the Polish state.

The third reason was the most serious one. The Allies agreed that the key task involved in their future policy in Germany must be denazification. That could only be successful if it developed only on German territory and without any irritating nationalistic conflicts among the minorities in neighboring countries.

The most important reasons for the Allied decision regarding the expatriation were thus not based on demands made by the Czechs or the Poles and certainly not on any "nationalism" or on the "principle of collective guilt," which Havel underscores, but with the result of the desire of the Allies to create favorable conditions for successful denazification. This is the anvil upon which was forged their difficult decision involving the temporary suffering of millions of expatriated Germans and the firm foundations of a final European peace, which was supposed to be stronger than the peace of Versailles.

The Expatriation Was Not National in Character

It is not true that the decision by Benes, particularly his decree dated 19 May 1945, which established expatriation criteria, was based on "a purely national principle," as Havel contends. According to him, national administration was imposed upon the property of "persons who were unreliable in the eyes of the state"—that is, not only Germans and Hungarians but also collaborators. But there is also Section 24, Paragraph 2, which makes an exception for Germans and Hungarians "provided they can reliably prove that they were victims of political or racial persecution and remained loyal to the democratic republic and to the idea of the Czechoslovak Republic as a state." According to that and other legal provisions, approximately 320,000 Germans, for the most part the older age groups, remained in the border areas.

An Unjust View of Guilt

Havel also said at the briefing, "We are not worse than others, but we are also not any better." Generally, that is certainly true, but, in regard to guilt for the horrible things done during World War II and their consequences, that is an unjust view. And it not only involves the fact that Germany was undoubtedly guilty of unleashing war and guilty of the cruel method by which it was conducted, but the fact that, in the second half of 1943 and once more following the June invasion by the Allies, when one nation after another rose up against the Nazi occupation, including the Czechs and the Slovaks, nothing similar occurred either in Germany or in the Sudeten area, but, in the end, not even within components of the Wehrmacht, also applies here as a criterion. Is not this fact proof of the depth to which the Nazi ideology was rooted in the German generations of the time? Here it is necessary to note that the German nation returned to the ranks of democratic nations in the course of the postwar decades primarily because it successfully and bravely negotiated one of the most noteworthy processes—

namely, the "mastery of its past." The foundation for the modern German moral catharsis was and is the full admission of Germany's guilt. Let us add that all those in Germany who were opposed to that, and who perhaps continue in opposition to this day, repeatedly list the same argument: that the Allies used violence against them and are thus "the same as us."

The Game of Delusion Involving a Different Past

V. Havel ranked the expatriation in the category of "dangerous nationalistic acts." He thus indirectly characterized it as something that should never have happened. In other words, he would have preferred another scenario of development. Historians have no love for such "games to invoke a different past" because they know very well how complicated and unpredictable forces cooperate in creating historic results. And, incidentally, the result is clear today: There was a historic overcoming of any German destabilizing, imperial nationalism in Europe. Even the good to friendly relationships between our people on our western border are a fact. Everything thus confirms that the direction upon which the men at Potsdam embarked has proved its justification. We can all the more clearly visualize, however, particularly following the current events in Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and Israel, what likely complications could have resulted from the expatriation being rejected either by the Potsdam Conference or by us. Cruel Stalinist power would have impacted upon 12 million Germans, who would have had no rights and who were living in the immediate vicinity of the Iron Curtain, which was being so strictly guarded. What would be the position not only of those who were guarding the Iron Curtain, and by what measures would they be guarding it, but what inflammatory consequences would result for the local German population? Can we also appreciate how all these explosions of police brutality and the multiplicity of gulags would be perceived by those who had embarked on the road to denazification and democratization in the democratic portion of Germany? Could they even have had a chance of aspiring to what is today our most prized social value of the present as well as any hope for the future? And would that environment of conflict—for example, during the critical moments of the cold war or during some Berlin or Cuban crisis among the great powers—not be a threat by the fact that its unrestrained explosion might result in a hot super-power conflict that might ignite global destruction? Did V. Havel think about those eventualities, too, when he expressed his lack of confidence in the Potsdam decision?

The Examination of History Has Its Rules

My remarks are intended to serve as a suggestion for a more thought out and more responsible approach to what Havel has indicated as being a duty "to tell the whole truth about our history in our own interest no matter how unpleasant and unpopular it might have been." I am convinced that, even though the truth may be bitter, people in this country would certainly accept it in the long run. But only if it is actually the truth. Over the past three centuries, the science of history has worked out a well-considered method of how to arrive at the truth. Its essence is the principle that it is

impossible to arrive at any kind of historical or even moral conclusion and at a judgment with responsibility before all the facts pertaining to events are collected and verified (E. Ranke) and before clarifying everything that has occurred, the circumstances under which it occurred, and, mainly, the reasons for the occurrence (M. Bloch). If the question were to arise whether one or another decision was a mistake, the principle that "if the event developed in a different way, there had to be even different reasons, and another variation is possible only within their framework" (E.H. Carr) must not be overlooked. It is only after an honest approach via all of the above phases of understanding that the outlines of the "full truth" will appear. But even that truth always requires additional processing and augmentation. In contrast, every judgment pronounced without that honest foundation is just as misleading as a judgment pronounced by a judge who passes sentence without having read the evidence. Moreover, a judgment pronounced by a political personality, as Montaigne wrote, "fatally distorts every other communication in the wrong direction." Truth then tends to give way to new special-purpose ideologies and misleading legends. And then it is a matter of even complete indifference whether such ideologies and legends are utilized by the left or by the right. The damage is always borne by society.

* ODA Deputy Chairman Discusses His Party

93CH0539B Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 1 Apr 93
pp 1, 9

[Interview with Daniel Kroupa, deputy chairman of the Civic Democratic Alliance, by Marie Koenigova; place and date not given: "The Ministry of Interior and BIS Should Not Remain in the Hands of One Party"]

[Text] *According to Daniel Kroupa, deputy chairman of ODA [Civic Democratic Alliance], the rising popularity of his party is the result of a quiet approach in solving unclear opinions. It is also the consequence of its attitude in preparing the Constitution, in electing the president, and regarding the question of temporary senators.*

[Koenigova] In conjunction with the effort to change the taxation laws, ODA was accused of pursuing an effete and almost populist policy: The charges had you selecting popular topics that can bring you quick successes, such as health care, education, and your rejection of general restitution applicable to the churches.

[Kroupa] The very quantity of the identified topics attests to the broad impact of ODA. The charges are self-serving, and there is no need to ascribe any importance to them. What is far more important is the fact that, in everyday political life, what we had difficulty in explaining to voters at meetings—namely, that there are differences in political orientation between ODA and the ODS [Civic Democratic Party]—is coming to pass. Those differences are not the kind that would move us to characterize one of those parties as drawing closer to the left, but, in such concrete cases as health care, housing policy, and the approach to taxation, ODA definitely differs. To call that a populist gesture is unfair because we were fighting for a lower tax burden as far back as in the Federal Assembly before the elections in the

conviction that it would result in a faster pace of growth for our economy. We were defeated on housing policy in the Federal Assembly, and that is why we are making efforts today to assert some of these principles within the framework of the coalition. ODA dealt with the privatization of the health care system as early as before the elections, and we were making specific proposals. When we are now seeing a certain helplessness on the part of the ministry, we offer our services. The fact that we are not only pursuing popular topics is proof of the fact that we are making a commitment on the question of returning Aryanized property. Even though that commitment affects a small number of people, it will probably encounter some latent anti-Semitism within society. As far as church property is concerned, differing viewpoints exist with ODA. I favor complete restitution; I am known as a restitution fanatic. Jan Kalvoda, who comes from a different family tradition, more likely favors the enumeration method.

[Koenigova] Can things be understood in such a light that some of your approaches could place you to the left of the ODS?

[Kroupa] I am afraid it is the other way around. The ODS stands to the left of us. The ODS, as the strongest political party, is pressed against the political center and is compelled to distance itself from some of its radical preelection statements. The appellation right. Left makes no sense here because it runs counter to the coalition. We can argue about who is more liberal or more conservative in that direction. In the economic sphere, ODA tends to be more liberal; in other areas, it is more conservative—on the basis of its dislike for strengthening state power. By promoting independent institutions. We particularly support those councils the prime minister has said are infesting our society with weeds because we see in them a strengthening of the civic society. We support endowment activities. In that respect, we are conservatives. And social feelings, understanding for questions of culture, for support for science—those cannot and must not be the banners of the left into the future. All political parties will have to devote attention to those matters.

[Koenigova] Has the period in which there was such an expressly close atmosphere surrounding ODA and its positions within the coalition that there was even talk of its voluntary or involuntary departure come to a close?

[Kroupa] The recent coalition negotiations do not overly mitigate the relationship within the coalition. What does mitigate them is the responsibility toward this country and the necessity for a stable government. That responsibility should be felt by even the opposition, and it should not strive to drive a wedge between the coalition partners because everyone must be clear about the fact that the country will benefit if it has a stable government for a longer period of time as well as a reliable system. The opposition can thus gain points toward the next election.

[Koenigova] You have stated what you expected from the opposition. Do you have the feeling that the coalition is sufficiently forthcoming with respect to the opposition? Parliamentary negotiations indicate that the coalition and

the opposition in this country are like water and fire. Do you have the feeling that their relationship is based on healthy foundations?

[Kroupa] That relationship is not as it should be in a democratic society. We believe there should be a general framework of agreement between the coalition and the opposition—for example, in foreign policy. On television, I attempted to get Milos Zeman to say a clear word regarding the relationship with NATO, and I am happy to say that he did. A few such statements from the opposition would clear the air and improve confidence—provided the lack of confidence has no reasons other than political. However, I do believe that mutual personal aversion applies to both coalition and opposition politicians. I do not harbor such aversions.

[Koenigova] You mention that the most recent coalition negotiations did not clear the air too much within the coalition. Do you have in mind the negotiations regarding personnel matters?

[Kroupa] Yes, I have those in mind. Particularly the supplement to the coalition agreement, which imposes a certain settlement on ODA. We had expected to receive offers that would be responsive to that supplement. In the event those expectations of ours are not fulfilled, we are prepared to accept nothing.

[Koenigova] So you insist that at least one of the positions in dispute is assigned to ODA? How do you visualize the fulfillment of the supplement, which could lead to the rejection of all of the offers?

[Kroupa] There are several such possibilities. We do not like to see positions that should remain apolitical being politicized. I have in mind the Supreme Audit Office and the Czech Statistical Office. In this situation, which has been rendered somewhat uncertain as a result of the lack of confidence, it would not be healthy for components that make use of so-called operational means—in other words, the Ministry of Interior and BIS [Security and Information Service]—to be in the hands of a single party. We would not consider it to be fortuitous for these functions to be carried out by people who do not enjoy the absolute confidence of all members of the coalition. In other words, even if we were not the ones to acquire these positions, the functions should be held by people who enjoy seriousness and confidence and will not use the positions against their political partners, be they in the coalition or the opposition.

[Koenigova] Do you perhaps have any signals indicating that people in these functions might in fact do so?

[Kroupa] As a conservative party, we have no confidence in human character. We know that people have bad inclinations and that it is necessary to seek insurance and counterweights against that.

[Koenigova] Do you believe that if the ODS were to hold one of the functions you would be capable of taking care of the other?

[Kroupa] I dare say so. The public would definitely perceive that in a more positive light if the functions were divided among several parties rather than if one party were to retain those functions.

[Koenigova] So you prefer specialized staffing over political staffing?

[Kroupa] Political control of those functions is important. The political parties must have specialists capable of those functions in their ranks. They exist in our ranks.

[Koenigova] Do you find that there are still other functions in which party affiliation should be a consideration during their staffing?

[Kroupa] I wish to express a certain degree of dissatisfaction with the manner in which some additional jobs are staffed, be they in the diplomatic service or the state administration—for example, the jobs of chiefs of okres offices. At the very least, it would be good to establish mechanisms that would prevent their unilateral political misuse.

[Koenigova] Do you have any specific ideas of how this could be done?

[Kroupa] For example, by creating coalition commissions or commissions expanded by the addition of opposition representatives, who would check on the staffing of these institutions.

[Koenigova] The ODA is being criticized for staffing all of the important positions having to do with privatization, which leads to their alleged misuse.

[Kroupa] This is deliberate disinformation based on the fact that some important functions in this area are being performed by our members. I would remind you that they hold these jobs because of their specialities and because of their capability to conceptually prepare for privatization. Everyone knows today that Tomas Jezek is the spiritual father of the entire concept of privatization. Jiri Skalicky shared in making laws in the Federal Assembly, and Vladimir Dlouhy is acting as a specialist at the Ministry of Industry. For an uninitiated person, this could indeed look like ODA is in control of this important privatization line. Actually, that is not the case. It was precisely ODA that saw to it that the approval of privatization cases would be handled in a maximum of possible steps and that the final word in these matters was that of the government. So it is nonsense to say that ODA was able to assert its interests, that it unilaterally made decisions to benefit someone. Or that it could even assert any obligations at all.

[Koenigova] Nevertheless, in conjunction with a number of privatization scandals, the responsibility for those scandals is being connected precisely with ODA.

[Kroupa] Privatization scandals are, for the most part, caused by officials exposed to a great deal of temptation aimed at moving things along or speeding things up at one or another of the steps, aimed at having them give priority to one privatization project over another. Such scandals can be prevented by maximum openness on the part of the privatization process and as a result of public control. I have

no illusions that, given such a large shift in property that privatization embodies, all scandals can be avoided. That is why ODA is insisting on the most rapid forms of privatization, so that the transfer of state property to citizens might progress more rapidly than the various mafias are capable of acting.

* Council for Radio, TV Broadcasting Annual Report

* Report Rejected

93CH0542A Prague CESKY DENIK in Czech 25 Mar 93 p 3

[Commentary by Martin Schmarcz: "Korte's Vanishing Prospects"]

[Text] Yesterday, parliament disapproved the annual report of the Czech Republic's Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting. The main reason was the circumstance about which I reported on 15 March and which was pointed out by the deputies when the report was submitted to the Chamber. The fact is that the voluminous, 34-page document does not include the most significant data—a report on the specific activities of the council in relation to granting licenses. Instead of giving reasons for decisions made on granting licenses, the report merely states who received which license, information that was surely already known by the deputies.

Only Korte's ODA [Civic Democratic Alliance] and some members of the CSSD [Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party] voted for the report. That came to 26 votes in all. Not even the opposition supported the council. One hundred and ten deputies, including the opposition, voted for Deputy Zemina's (ODS [Civic Democratic Party]) proposal to disapprove the report. Parliament decided that the council would have to rework its report. If parliament disapproves it for a second time, it will mean that the council will be removed as a whole. The question is whether the council will succeed in sufficiently clarifying the reasons that led it to grant licenses in individual instances to specific applicants. The deputies certainly have their doubts about that. Indeed, most of the complaints that led to the council's activities were in regard to the process of granting licenses. The inconsistent and unequal process of licensing procedures, the unprofessional approach of members of the council in reviewing individual applications, the noncompliance with criteria prescribed by law, as well as inadequate verification of requirements set by the council itself were criticized. The result was total obscurity in the decisionmaking.

In Daniel Korte's opinion, the report was disapproved for political reasons. The deputies, on the other hand, maintain that the reason was the factual shortcomings of the report. The total absence of any substantiation for the council's decisions lends credence to the deputies. The fact that, during the vote, the line dividing supporters of the report from its opponents ran across all parties of the coalition and opposition as well as individual deputies' clubs, contradicts Korte. However, Korte has been suffering from "political

persecution mania" for some time. He has assumed the role of a modern dissident, who resists the malicious pressure of the imperious party secretariats with all his strength. However, we may be able to judge the extent to which he keeps to the rules of fair play when the council submits the new version of the report to parliament, a version that will include detailed and professional substantiation for the council's decisionmaking. Only if the council sufficiently clarifies these issues can Korte hope to keep his position. But his prospects are vanishing.

*** Deputy's Comment**

93CH0542B Prague CESKY DENIK in Czech 3 Apr 93
p 3

[Article by parliamentary deputy Ondrej Zemina (ODS):
"Korte's Council's Chaotic Work"]

[Text] Last week, the Chamber of Deputies in parliament disapproved the Report on the Status of Broadcasting and the Activities of the Czech Republic's Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting. According to the letter of the law, the council has no choice but to try to solicit the favor of the deputies by resubmitting a new report. The Chamber of Deputies' attitude gave rise to a number of assumptions and conjectures, which are generally very contradictory. The chairman of the council, Daniel Korte, declared that the disapproval of the submitted report was a political act, but a number of journalists pointed out the imprecision and incompleteness of the mentioned report in their commentaries. (Incidentally, only isolated deputies from the ODA [Civic Democratic Alliance], the party for whom Daniel Korte campaigned during the last parliamentary elections, voted against the decision to disapprove.) Therefore, let us review the whole affair one more time.

According to the laws regulating the media, the Czech Republic's Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting is the "supreme" agency of state administration (*sui generis*) that is active in this sphere. Its members are elected by the Chamber of Deputies (formerly the Czech National Council) for a period of six years, and, due to the liberal nature of the above-mentioned laws, it is almost impossible to remove them. With a bit of exaggeration, one could say that, "in return," the council has a number of rights and obligations, which should aim toward establishing and ensuring a functioning dual system in radio and television broadcasting, toward a system in which public institutions (in our case, Czech Radio and Czech Television) and private radio and television stations would compete with one another. But, at this point, we run into the first mistake made by the council during the time it was active. It pushed all of the jurisdiction granted it by the law onto the sidelines and concentrated exclusively on granting licenses for radio and, ultimately, also television broadcasting. Retroactive linkages and verifications of stations that were already broadcasting, without any kind of plan. If this were not so, it would hardly be possible for the council to thoughtlessly grant more and more licenses for radio broadcasting to applicants who offer almost identical subject matter—music, music, music. As a result, totally paradoxically, as far as newscasting and reporting are concerned, the listener is

relegated exclusively to Czech Radio, Radio Free Europe, and the BBC. Although I understand the demanding nature of news broadcasting in private stations, I doubt that this is the way to achieve true competition in radio broadcasting. There is also a similar situation in regard to the activities of the council, which talks about controlling the entities running the stations in connection with the proportion of advertising in their programs. In the report, the council often refers to the state agencies' reluctance to cooperate more closely with it. But nowhere is there an explanation of why nine members of the council (incidentally, very well paid for their activities) did not at least monitor broadcasts by Czech Television and the radio stations that were already broadcasting as far as this specific subject is concerned. The council's jurisdiction in regard to establishing a plan for the development of broadcasting in the Czech Republic and participation in creating the principles of state policy in respect to the media was also totally neglected. If this were not so, the council would surely have already elaborated its ideas in regard to cable television distribution and could not so frivolously consider permitting the MMDS system (multichannel wireless transmission operating on the microwave frequency band), which, as far as I know, was rejected by the majority of West European countries.

But let us return to the part of the report that discusses granting licenses. This fundamental area, from the aspect of the council's activities to date, is described in a "he came, he went" style, a manner that makes it difficult for the deputies to arrive at even general conclusions as to the basic criteria used by the council in granting individual licenses.

The council now has the opportunity to convince the Chamber of Deputies in the resubmitted report that its past endeavors were systematic and that, under difficult circumstances, which no one doubts, it did its best to create a functioning model in the sphere of the media. Should it not do so, the law provides the deputies with the option to remove the members of the council. And, if we consider the fact that the chairman of the council probably devotes most of his time and energy to fighting the various "party secretariats," justifying his actions with the statement that all of them, with the exception of himself, are striving to politicize the media, the question arises as to whether he is at all capable of performing his function responsibly because the liberal nature of the attitude of a number of council members toward their duties cannot be termed anything but chaotic.

*** Situation in Radiobroadcasting Described**

*** Status of Personnel**

93CH0541A Prague TELEGRAF in Czech 26 Mar 93 p
9

[Article by Josef Landergott: "An Opportunity for Czech Radio—How the Public Institution Is Subject to Public Control"]

[Text] *With the end of Czechoslovakia, all federal institutions either went out of business or transformed themselves—that is, they amalgamated with the appropriate Czech*

Republic institutions. This brought about a state of affairs with which the public is frequently dissatisfied and is also justifiably letting this fact be known. The most highly visible and audible example is the situation in our public broadcasting media—in radiobroadcasting and television. Voices of dissatisfaction have even been heard regarding the personnel staffing of the management of Czech Radio and Czech Television, words coming even from representatives of the government coalition. I believe it is appropriate to draw attention to some factors that today speak for a change in Czech Radio.

It is occasionally being claimed that Czech Radio is lacking in personalities. After the demise of federal broadcasting, not all of the top publicists and reporters were taken over by the new Czech Radiobroadcasting Facility. Some are active in private stations, and some were given the opportunity of participating in competitions related to the new staffing of management jobs. Among others, this is the case for Boris Riegler, who related his case to the readers of *TELEGRAF* a short while ago. It is noteworthy that such an experienced and popular reporter must now, already in the fourth competitive round, demonstrate his capabilities. Certainly, this will not be only due to the greater or lesser liability resulting from two or three of the virtually thousands of programs broadcast by him: Can any of his critics prove, in a completely different position, that he became less confused regarding knowledge in the recent past? These are the risks of working in communications media under totalitarianism. A person who is uncovering wrongdoing is, of course, uncomfortable under any regime; primarily, in the case of those who committed themselves in any number of ways, then and now.

The activities of Czech Radio are to be overseen by an independent nine-member Council for Czech Radiobroadcasting. It was established on 1 February 1992 and, at its first session, was to confirm or appoint a director general. The director general of Czech Radio at that time was Dr. Jiri Mejstrik, who had been appointed to that position by the central director of Federal Radio, Dr. Frantisek Pavlicek, in the course of 1991. Before that appointment, Mejstrik was the editor of *MIKROFORUM*, among others. Before making its selection, the Council for Czech Radiobroadcasting asked Dr. Mejstrik to present his personnel file. However, he stated that personnel files no longer exist at Czech Radio; they were allegedly turned over to the employees after the November events to the extent to which they were requested. At the next meeting of the council, director Dr. Mejstrik provided the appropriate data orally and stated that he had not been a member of the CPCZ [Czechoslovak Communist Party] and that his lustration report had been negative. On the basis of this unverified declaration, the council cast the majority of its votes for Dr. Mejstrik and appointed him to be director general of Czech Radio for a legal term of several years. However, it later turned out that that part of his claim—namely, that regarding the nonexistence of personnel files at Czech Radio—did not reflect the actual facts. Testimony by other employees and various written documents and regulations clearly indicated that, within Czech Radio, personnel files are made regarding every employee from the date of employment at

the enterprise. Nevertheless, the director has to this day not submitted the requested documents to the council.

According to Czech National Council Law No. 484/91 Collection of Laws [Sb.], the Council for Czech Radiobroadcasting, which is elected by the Czech Republic legislature, is "an organ through which the right of the public to control the creation and dissemination of Czech Radio programs is asserted." In view of the fact that this is a fundamental and actually the only mission of radiobroadcasting, the council has the right to control everything, beginning with the editorial offices, the economic components, and the equipment, and ending with personnel questions. In this connection, the activities of the council are actually very characteristic. The council itself voted not to appropriate to itself even the right to determine necessary data contained in administrative documentation within the framework of its legal control responsibilities. It kept only the right to ask the director questions and to subsequently verify the results of his decisions—not, in other words, to check on the activities of the radiobroadcaster, and particularly not its management.

That is why, among other things, the method by which the current leading program employees were appointed has not been clarified to this day. Director Dr. Mejstrik obviously selected eight candidates, without first announcing a regular public competition—a competition whose impartiality would be guaranteed by an independent competition commission under public oversight; after all, the director general manages a public broadcasting facility! On the contrary, he appointed those eight chiefs as of 1 May of last year by himself, allegedly on a temporary basis for a period of one year. By this method, the appointees include, for example, even Dr. Jiri Kamen, editor in chief of the Vltava Station, and Ivan Ruml, a dramatist from the same station. Dr. Kamen had been part of the *nomenklatura* cadres as the former editor in chief of the literary drama section of Czech Radio prior to November 1989, and I. Ruml had been the chairman of one of the basic organizations of the CPCZ at Czech Radio.

Following these "unclearities," the council initially decided that all of the leading functions at Czech Radio would continue to be staffed only on the basis of results of independent specialized contests. To this day, however, the council has not discussed, let alone approved, the basic principles of the contest proceedings. This circumstance is all the more serious because 1 May will mark the expiration of the one-year time limit of the above-mentioned (alleged) temporarily staffed functions.

Czech Radio is predominantly financed on the basis of concessionary fees. This should act to assure its independence along material lines as well. That is why the listening public also has a right to be provided with the best information regarding the status of things. No one need be reminded what an extraordinarily social force is represented by statewide public broadcasting (see the ultimate warning example presented by the Yugoslavia of Milosevic). In the light of the above facts, the approach by director Dr. Mejstrik appears to be politically highly dangerous. His

organizational measures are conspicuously reminiscent of an effort to preserve positions for people who have been discredited by their pasts. It is not for naught that employees of the radiobroadcaster are saying among themselves that the current status at Czech Radio is the result of the hard struggle between the "sixty-eighters" and those who are "younger," who, of course, in turn served the pre-November management. And they proved capable of misusing the newcomers or those who were newly installed. Real personalities with appropriate specialized and civic prerequisites are in short supply—to the detriment of our public. It is characteristic for them that they have no choice but to await the results of the clash between two disparate power groups who are clearly concerned with something quite different from the effort to provide the public with "objective, open, impartial, and balanced information to support the free creation of views," as the law charges them to do.

No one doubts the general benefit derived from the public broadcasting principle applied to our mass communications media. In this regard, we can take an example from, say, the BBC. But it is good to note the means by which the BBC achieved its deserved reputation: They include a high level of speciality and consistent public control. In both of these areas, we have much to catch up with, and that should not be a matter of indifference for our fellow citizens, nor for their elected representatives in parliament, and it should not apply only to the case of Czech Radio.

The pressure of public opinion and, in the end, even pressure from the political parties led director Dr. Mejstrik to resign, a resignation the majority of the members of the council did not accept in the beginning. In the end, even Dr. Zd. Susa, the council chairman, resigned. The Chamber of Delegates in the parliament is already dealing with the situation in radiobroadcasting and with the work of the council on broadcasting. We shall return to this entire situation in the future.

* Method of Operation

93CH0541B Prague TELEGRAF in Czech 2 Apr 93 p 9

[Interview with Ivo Rottenberg, radio expert, by Jan Decker; place and date not given: "Radio as Seen From Within"]

[Text] *Regarding radio, which is his hobby, Ivo Rottenberg even let himself be expelled from the study of medicine and infected part of his family with the radio hobby. This year, he will mark the 30th anniversary of collaborating with radio-broadcasting. Apart from the fact that he is known as an outstanding specialist in broadcasting equipment, he is known for being an excellent expert in radiobroadcasting conditions. In view of the fact that, in recent times, the problems of this institution are being aired far too frequently and far too loudly, we made use of the opportunity and our acquaintance with Rottenberg and asked him a few questions.*

[Decker] Can you tell us what is going on in the radio world?

[Rottenberg] Initially, a big "bang," as broadcasting employees refer to the reorganization, was expected. For

now, it looks as though things are moving only at the top. We know that director general Jiri Mejstrik abdicated, as did the head of the news department, Zbynek Honys. What is tasty regarding the entire series of events is that the current listener did not even react to those developments because the program does not indicate who is at the top and who is "in charge."

[Decker] Can you clarify for us what the term "who is in charge" of things signifies?

[Rottenberg] What is involved here is radio, but I do not mean to say that it is the building. Rather, it is the system that functions without regard to the kind of director it has. Be honest, are you familiar with the director of every broadcaster whose programs you listen to? We know the individual employees—I call them pawns on the chessboard of the radio battlefield. They must deliver their daily program, they must worry about listeners, and they represent for the listener what we imagine under the concept of radiobroadcasting. You will surely recall the name of Josef Laufer, the legendary sports commentator. Take a public poll to see who among his listeners might recall the name of the director. The question is how a director is capable of creating conditions for the work of these "pawns," how successfully he comes to terms with individual interest groups that are striving to claw their way to the top, the same as everywhere else. I believe that, at this point, director general Jiri Mejstrik gave up the struggle. He is angry with the Council for Radiobroadcasting, but, in my opinion, it was the council that was the only one to defend, and I hope it will continue to defend, the interests of the listener.

[Decker] How can the interests of the listeners be defended at all?

[Rottenberg] Those who are satisfied do not write very often, and, when they do, they express their thanks to individual editors or interpreters. Those who are dissatisfied write far more frequently. They complain about the music on a program, about the reporting, and about all matter of things. These are not compulsive writers but, in my view, are those who, despite all the criticism, are not damning radio and who believe that their letters could serve as a sort of inspiration. There is room here for the program council to select good programs as well as voices that speak to the listener. There is room for "arguing about" the program scheme and about the image of broadcasting circles. Of course, if one writes about the radio and speaks about it without authorization, that does not result in the creation of a good working environment for those who make their living in broadcasting and who are doing everything to prevent the listener from recognizing the depth of the moral devastation and the struggle for jobs that is taking place in the background.

[Decker] You are saying that radio is beset by moral devastation and a struggle for jobs?

[Rottenberg] In which state institution does this not exist? The radio was the sounding board for the Central Committee of the CPCZ [Czechoslovak Communist Party] from

1948 until the revolution in November 1989. I happen to believe that, in radiobroadcasting, that revolution was never completed; I will not talk about communists and noncommunists. Even I was in radiobroadcasting and thus served the regime through my work. But it was in the field of equipment, something that permitted me to survive. But the fact that I was not in the party prevented me from holding a job that I would like to have had; but I was able to remain clean. Not everyone was so lucky. Of course, that is a question of individual conscience. The difficulty lies in the fact that communists of all developmental stages are found here, and I would make things even more complicated by pointing out that individuals who were not party members but who lived in radiobroadcasting for a substantial period of time must necessarily be characterized by the method of thinking that prevailed in this medium. Unfortunately, even new journalists were, for the most part, doing their studies under the previous regime.

[Decker] All right, what should the director have done in that case?

[Rottenberg] Primarily, not begun using tough language, remembered his promises, and not surrounded himself with people who always agreed with him. Despite the fact that, for those reasons, I did not believe our director too much, I now value the fact that he realized that and resigned in sufficient time. (I hope it was in sufficient time.) It would upset me if enemies were being sought outside radiobroadcasting. At the Council on Radiobroadcasting, they could finally get going and begin to debate the whole broadcasting concept. The fact that radio is operating without a concept is manifested primarily in contacts with telecommunications media, which are then accused of discriminating against radiobroadcasting.

[Decker] But it is being said that his resignation was primarily for reasons of health.

[Rottenberg] I do not know why I would not believe him on that point, but it is also being said that he is leaving to join some kind of private radiobroadcaster. That will be verified by time.

[Decker] What do you expect to happen during the current period?

[Rottenberg] Radiobroadcasting will most likely continue. After all, the listener does not care what is happening within the radio facility. He only wants his programs, and, fortunately, there are enough good ones. I would like to wish the creators the type of comfort enjoyed by an agreeable listener. I am waiting for across-the-board private broadcasting, which will amount to real competition for Czech Radio and will thus represent fulfillment of the effort to achieve a dual system.

[Decker] Your domain is equipment. How does Czech Radio stand in that regard?

[Rottenberg] Sure, it is not the most modern equipment, but it can still serve well. The radio facility has enough inventive technicians, and, if I listen to one or another of the radio plays, I have no fears in that regard. I consider it to be unfortunate if radio employees use the occasion of various conferences to make excuses for inadequate technical equipment; they only tend to document their laziness or perhaps their lack of capability that way. The listener need not always have the most modern radio receiver, either.

[Decker] Is it true that you yourself want to leave Czech Radio?

[Rottenberg] That is not true; Czech Radio has left me.

[Decker] For what reason?

[Rottenberg] Not a single employee was found who would tell me so to my face. Perhaps because I worked with equipment for only 26 years, that I know the building in the Vinohrady section of Prague from the cellar to the attic, and because I am so presumptuous as to think that I could handle things in any sector of equipment.

[Decker] So what will you be doing?

[Rottenberg] I will take a little rest and then continue working in the technical advisory section of the periodical ROZHLAS, where I have enough readers after 20 years, and, of course, I will be active in a similar column in TELEGRAF.

*** Number of Newly Founded Firms Increases**

93CH0571A Budapest FIGYELO in Hungarian 1 Apr 93 p 7

[Unattributed article: "Initiatives To Establish New Firms Do Not Abate"]

[Text] Almost a thousand more incorporated business organizations operated in Hungary in February than a month earlier. Their number at present exceeds 72,400.

The limited-liability corporation form of business continues to be most widespread; 83 percent of the businesses operate in this form. The popularity of this form may be attributed to the relatively low amount of minimum capital required by law, and to the limited financial liability of the owners. As compared to the previous month, the number of cooperatives increased by 1.2 percent, while the number of enterprises decreased by 5 percent.

Most firms—almost 24,550—are engaged in commerce or in the repair of vehicles and other public necessities.

The growth pattern continues to be characterized by the increase in the number of organizations employing a small number of people—20, at most. Approximately 84.6 percent

of the firms established in February belong to this category; within that group, the number of firms employing a maximum of 10 people has increased, at best. The ratio of these organizations within all incorporated organizations has reached 40 percent.

**Distribution of Incorporated Business
Organizations Based on Number of Employees¹
(at end of period)**

Number of Employees	Number of Organizations	Percentage Distribution per Categories of Number of Employees
More than 300	1,634	2.3
51-300	5,784	8.2
21-50	7,063	10.0
11-20	27,980	39.7
Fewer than 10	28,039	39.8
Total	70,500	100

¹Not including housing and garage cooperatives, organizations subject to liquidation, and organizations with an unknown number of employees.

*** Poll Indicates Support for Governing Coalition***93EP0226B Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 31 Mar 93 p 2*

[Article by Bernadeta Waszkiewicz: "Is the Road Clear? What the Public Thinks of the Government"]

[Text] The government's position is growing stronger, as reflected in the steady growth in the predominance of respondents who support the current Cabinet over its opponents and the rise in confidence in Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka. On the other hand, the overall assessment of the government's performance remains unchanged, and this stagnation is accompanied by rising criticism of specified domains of the work of the Cabinet. It is worth noting in this connection that the poll was conducted following a budget debate in which the government was successful and less than a week before the defeat sustained by Suchocka's Cabinet, when it lost the vote on the Mass Privatization Program.

Government Supporters

According to the CBOS [Public Opinion Survey Center] poll, in March, more people (44 percent) than a month previously (36 percent) defined themselves as supporters of the present government. This has resulted in a record-breaking 20-percent predominance of supporters over opponents of the government.

Most of the government's supporters come from among the self-employed and the intelligentsia and managerial personnel, and the fewest from among the unemployed, farmers, and unskilled workers. (In February, that group included skilled workers.)

The supporters of the government invariably come from among those defining their views as rightist or centrist (altogether 62 percent), while the opponents profess leftist views (32 percent).

Opponents of the Government's Policy

Between November 1992 and March 1993, the group of people critically viewing discrete domains of work of the government has increased in numbers, and the proportion of respondents holding no opinion on this matter or evaluating the government's performance positively has decreased. Most often, the government's economic policy was viewed as adequate (44 percent), but nearly as many respondents criticize it for being inadequate (37 percent); in the latter case, the number of critics has increased by 12 percentage points since last November.

The government's social policy got the lowest grade; 47 percent of the respondents, or clearly more than the others, view it as inadequate. The government's performance as regards law enforcement is viewed more critically now. Only 10 percent view it as good, 37 percent consider it adequate, and 38 percent find it inadequate. As before, the government's foreign policy got the top mark, but, even here, the predominance of good (35 percent) and very good (3 percent) assessments over adequate assessments (34 percent) is not that big.

Even so, the public's trust in Prime Minister Suchocka remains at a very high level—78 percent—and, compared with February, it has risen by 7 percentage points. The prime minister at present is ranked first among the most trusted politicians. On the other hand, the degree of satisfaction with Hanna Suchocka's becoming the head of government has not changed since January.

* * *

The poll was conducted on 12-14 March 1993 on a 1,233-person representative random sample of Poland's adult population.

*** PSL Said Interested in Joining Government Coalition***93EP0226A Warsaw PRAWO I ZYCIE in Polish No 14, 3 Apr 93 p 6*

[Interview with Jozef Zych, chairman of the PSL Main Council and Sejm vice speaker, by Zdzislaw Zaryczny; place and date not given: "A Fixed Element of the Game"]

[Text] [Zaryczny] I noticed that you have become much more active in recent weeks. Is this somehow connected to the attacks on the Sejm Presidium, as a kind of self-defense maybe?

[Zych] No, then and now I have always treated my duties in the Presidium seriously. It is simply that, in the past weeks, those duties have become more onerous in view of the variety and importance of the proposed legislation to be considered. That has coincided with many meetings in various voivodships to which I had been invited earlier by, among others, lawyers, university students, miners, and farmers. It is unrelated to any attempt on my part to defend the Sejm Presidium and, more so, myself. To be sure, though, there has not been a meeting at which I did not have to clear up a distorted image of our parliament.

[Zaryczny] Why is it that precisely at present the Sejm Presidium is under such a cloud?

[Zych] Precisely at present? I am not so sure about that, considering that the motion to recall the Presidium was presented as long as two months ago. To be sure, that motion fell by the wayside, but the recalls of individual members of the Presidium are being predicted. Clearly, that does in some way affect our work.

[Zaryczny] Is it right for people to claim that five vice speakers are a bit too many?

[Zych] I find it very difficult to answer such a question. Because I take part in the preparation of Sejm sessions and in all of the everyday chores involved, I cannot agree that there are too many Presidium members.

[Zaryczny] But the greatest complaint is that the Presidium is not keeping under control the situation in the Sejm and the course of legislative work, thereby weakening the effectiveness and pace of reform in this country.

[Zych] I most definitely reject this accusation. After all, the Sejm Presidium is not a political body, and the fact that its members represent varied political groupings, both those of the coalition and those of the opposition, has no bearing on the merits of their work. Second, the Presidium is vested with legislative initiative only as regards changes in the house rules of the Sejm, and it has already twice availed itself of that right. I do not know, either, just how the Presidium would "weaken the pace of the reforms." After all, every issue in question is immediately considered; it is no accident that, during the current term, the Presidium has already met more than 160 times. If the complaint about the inability to keep the Sejm under control is considered only with respect to the manner in which deliberations are conducted, the matter is too complicated—owing to various circumstances, emotions, nuances of house rules, and so forth—to be viewed from the observer's viewpoint alone.

[Zaryczny] Soon now the Sejm will be voting on the motion to recall Vice Speaker Andrzej Kern. How will the Presidium's members react?

[Zych] I believe they will vote according to their personal beliefs and consciences, also taking into account the manner in which we have been jointly working within the Presidium.

[Zaryczny] Will you vote against?

[Zych] Sorry, I cannot answer that; otherwise, my reply would be misinterpreted before the vote. But certainly how I will vote will be my decision alone.

[Zaryczny] The members of the Sejm Presidium include the leaders of two political parties. Speaker Wiesław Chrząnowski is highly visible as the leader of the ZChN [Christian-National Union]. You as the chairman of the Main Council of the PSL [Polish Peasant Party] seem to be too rarely advocating your party's program.

[Zych] That is not how the matter should be postulated. When I chair the Sejm's deliberations, I cannot identify myself with any political party whatsoever. That should be obvious. As for my activities within the PSL Caucus of Deputies, that is a horse of another color; there I often participate in discussions of, for example, privatization, NIK [Supreme Chamber of Control] reports, and so forth. That can be verified from the minutes of their meetings. I do not think any deputy has doubts as to the party on whose behalf I speak out.

[Zaryczny] Viewed from both those angles—as a vice speaker chairing the deliberations and a deputy participating in them—how do you judge the effectiveness of the PSL Caucus?

[Zych] The Caucus is extremely proactive and raises important national issues such as the food industry and agriculture, privatization, unemployment, and so forth. But, as for its effectiveness, that leaves something to be desired. But that is no longer the PSL's problem alone. Consider that the present Sejm adopted many resolutions concerning agriculture, but none of them has been fulfilled.

[Zaryczny] The PSL nowadays is in an unusual position. On the one hand, it is subject to political repressions—yes, a spade should be called a spade—consisting of the dismissals of high government officials who are associated with the PSL.

[Zych] You are referring to the dismissal of Prof. Józef Zegar, from the Central Planning Office, and Lesław Podkański, from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, are you not? Yes, indeed, this thing is upsetting to our party. It is, if not blackmail, certainly strong pressure being exerted on the PSL by the government. If that pressure intensifies and if the dismissals are indeed motivated by the desire to retaliate against the PSL for its stance during the voting on the budget and the privatization program, I want to warn the government and the coalition. Steps of this kind will bear no good fruit.

[Zaryczny] That is the stick, but there is also the carrot. Almost every day the press is speculating about the PSL's joining the governing coalition. What is true, and what is sham about that?

[Zych] For a start, consider that apparently all of the political groupings, from the right to the left, are aware that bringing the Polish political scene into order, especially to assure an effective governance, requires strengthening the coalition. Admittedly, discussions about broadening the coalition by including the PSL are nothing new. We are not overestimating our own worth, but it seems to us that the inclusion of the PSL would indeed stabilize the coalition. But we can discuss inclusion only if the basic planks of the PSL's economic program are accepted by the present coalition and the government. Of course, that would have to be followed by new personnel appointments to particular ministries.

[Zaryczny] There is a rumor afoot in the Sejm that the PSL is insisting on having its members appointed to the posts of one deputy prime minister and four ministers.

[Zych] I repeat: The basic precondition is the acceptance of our program.

[Zaryczny] The "carrot" is extended to the PSL by various groups. On the one hand, the ZChN proclaims that Poland's future lies in a coalition of nationalist, peasant, and Christian forces. On the other, the SLD [Democratic Left Alliance] is predicting a center-left government, with the participation of the PSL.

[Zych] It is very good that everyone views our party as a major partner. As far as I am concerned, I believe that Poland's future lies in coalitions formed for the purpose of solving particular major national problems. Given that assumption, the PSL can cooperate with both the right and the left. We shall talk with anyone who wants to do something for this country. We do not reject anyone in advance. As for formally joining the coalition, however, that will have to be decided by the PSL Main Council.

[Zaryczny] These days, the interest of political parties and parliamentary caucuses in a new electoral law has markedly increased. Does that mean that the Sejm's term is coming to an end?

[Zych] I do not perceive that peril. The issue of the electoral law became urgent after the president declared that, in the event the budget was rejected, he would dissolve the Sejm. Subsequent events, the growing signs of a crisis of the governing coalition, and the successive "storms" within the parliament have been prompting a crystallization of the views on calling for earlier elections. Even the parties and factions that previously did not comment on this issue are now expressing their views on it.

[Zaryczny] Is the PSL also in favor of early elections?

[Zych] Contrary to various speculations, our party has not finalized its position on the matter. After all, the PSL's standing is good, popular acceptance of our program is growing, and we have no special reason to demand earlier elections. Of course, our position may change in the event that, say, the present government collapses and there is an impasse about forming a new one. But, for now, our position is clear: We do not view early elections as urgent, but, if they are decreed, we would not fear them.

[Zaryczny] Does the PSL believe that the durability of the current governing coalition is linked to the durability of the current parliament?

[Zych] No.

[Zaryczny] Can you conceive of a collapse of the current coalition and the formation of a new one, of a new government by the current parliament?

[Zych] Yes, that is conceivable. The domain of activity of the various parties and groupings and the problem of the activities of the parliament and its ability to form a new government are two separate problems, even though they are closely linked.

[Zaryczny] But critics are accusing the current Sejm of having exhausted its possibilities and of no longer being able to build anything new.

[Zych] Only those ignorant of the purposes of the Sejm may think so. Above all, the Sejm is a lawmaking body. Thus, if we assume that there exist definite groups of individuals and political parties that may promote certain orientations of legislation, that means that the Sejm is and shall remain capable of accomplishing its principal purposes.

[Zaryczny] In a nutshell, you mean we should praise the current parliament because the next one might be worse, do you not?

[Zych] Why exaggerate? One should simply be aware of the proper duties of the Sejm and objectively evaluate how it is fulfilling them in the light of the Constitution, its own house rules, and the law governing the duties and obligations of the deputies.

[Zaryczny] Thank you for the interview.

* ATT To Help Modernize Gdansk Telephone System

93EP0225B Warsaw *RZECZPOSPOLITA (ECONOMY AND MARKET supplement)* in Polish 27-28 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Zbigniew Zwierzchowski: "Telephones for the Gdynia-Gdansk-Sopot Tricity, Jobs for Bydgoszcz: ATT Is Modernizing Telecommunications in Gdansk Voivodship"]

[Text] TP SA (Polish Telecommunications, Inc.) has chosen as the winning bidder AT&T NSI (Network Systems International) to modernize and expand telecommunications in Gdansk Voivodship. On Friday, in the presence of Minister of Communications Krzysztof Kilian, a nomination agreement was signed by TP SA and AT&T. It concerns a project that, after two years, will provide telecommunications services to more than 200,000 subscribers. The value of the contract will reach \$100 million, and the signed agreement also obligates AT&T to organize the financial package for this investment.

"The selection of this partner took place, thanks to last year's decisions of the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers, as part of an orderly telecommunications policy. AT&T took over the Bydgoszcz Telfa [Telecommunications Equipment] Plant and met the conditions for the legal use of its system of 5ESS exchanges in the Polish public communications network. Thus, the agreement is also a consequence of last year's government decisions," said Minister Kilian.

The contract will be implemented largely by Bydgoszcz Telfa, according to Auke Gerbens, a vice president of AT&T NSI who had, jointly with Vice President of TP SA Zdzislaw Nowak, signed the agreement. Thus, the project is important to both telephone subscribers in Gdansk Voivodship and the employees of Telfa because it makes it possible to begin carrying out AT&T's plans for Telfa. Telephone exchanges will begin to be manufactured in Bydgoszcz, and their installation, too, will be handled by Telfa.

The new network will consist of four central telephone exchanges plus local switching facilities. A. Gerbens added that fiber-optic and copper cable manufactured in Poland will be used in implementing the project. AT&T is already using in our country the fiber-optic cable manufactured by the Lublin OTO plant.

The Gdansk telecommunications hub has at present 180,000 subscribers. Some of them will be linked to the installations that make up the project, and nearly 130,000 will be new ones. Z. Nowak said that this will fully meet the needs of the tricity and environs, including Wejherowo and Tczew. A further increase in the number of subscribers will also be possible. In effect, the indicator of telephone density in the Gdansk region, which at present is nine subscribers per 100 capita, will rise to 20 per 100. For Poland as a whole, at the end of 1992 this indicator amounted to 10.2 per 100 capita, and, by the year 2000, it is to exceed 20 per 100.

When asked about the funding sources for the project, Nowak said that their forms also will be novel. The basis is to be the credit provided by the equipment supplier, but, at the same time, a consortium is being established for these matters, and, in addition, the project is expected to become financially self-supporting within eight years.

—The U.S. AT&T entered the Polish market in 1990, when it concluded a contract to supply equipment for the international telephone exchange in Warsaw. The aggregate value of the company's investments and equipment shipments exceeded \$100 million by the end of 1992. The representatives of TP SA emphasized that this new project strengthens AT&T's standing as a major foreign investor in domestic telecommunications (though still behind Alcatel and Siemens).

* Japan Buys Patent for Environmental Control Device

93EP0225E Warsaw *RZECZPOSPOLITA (ECONOMY AND MARKET supplement)* in Polish 26 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Krystyna Forowicz: "Electrons Contra Combustion Gases: Japanese Purchase Polish Technology"]

[Text] Over three years, more than \$625,000 will be assigned by the Japanese Government for the development of a new method for the purification of combustion gases in Poland. The method will be based on nuclear techniques being currently tested at the Kaweczyn Thermoelectric Power Plant, as declared at last Thursday's press conference in Warsaw by Sueo Machin, deputy director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] in Vienna.

This original technique for the simultaneous removal of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from the gases emitted in the course of coal combustion, developed by scientists at the Institute of Nuclear Chemistry and Engineering, is exciting the interest of the world's economic superpowers. Americans, Australians, Germans, and Japanese have been visiting the Kaweczyn Power Plant, where the first pilot station of that kind recently started operating. The new technology has already been discussed on the United Nations forum.

Sueo Machi defined the Polish solution as the most promising for the coming turn of the century.

The secret of this technology, protected by four Polish and foreign patents, consists in wetted gases being combined with ammonia and thereupon excited by a strong electron beam. The chemical process can be concentrated within a small space, even in old and densely built-up facilities. The investment cost is 30 percent lower and less energy-intensive than the traditional methods. The efficiency with which nitrogen oxides are removed from the combustion gases reaches 80-90 percent, and sulfur oxides more than 90 percent.

The Polish patent was bought by the Japanese firm Ebara, which makes environmental protection equipment. The Japanese are interested in further cooperation with Polish scientists. They intend to invest in the application of this

technology at the Pomorzany Power Plant. Perhaps some funds will also be allocated by the IAEA, said Sueo Machi.

A similar technology based on electron beams is at present used at, in addition to Kaweczyn, three pilot stations in Japan: in Nagoya, to purify the gases of coal combustion; in Tokyo, to purify combustion gases in the tunnel under Tokyo Bay; and in Matsudo, to remove dioxins and hydrogen chloride from a trash incinerator.

In the opinion of Polish Atomic Energy Agency chairman Niewodniczanski, the new technology can be used on an industrial scale. The Institute of Nuclear Chemistry and Technology and the Proatom Design Bureau have already drafted the next two blueprint projects, which will be translated into reality in cooperation with German and Japanese partners. Most elements of the facility (about 80 percent) will be Polish-made.

Poland will be the first country to apply the new method on an industrial scale. The cost of the project for the Pomorzany Power Plant alone is estimated at \$16 million. One-half of the funds will be provided by foreign capital.

* Restructuring of Fuel Industry Discussed

93EP0227A Warsaw *PRAWO I ZYCIE* in Polish No 14, 3 Apr 93 p 10

[Article by Piotr D. Chojnowski: "PRAWO I ZYCIE Report on Fuels: Before the Reform"]

[Text] When last September the Council of Ministers adopted a program for the restructuring and privatization of the oil industry in Poland, it had seemed that it would shortly begin to be implemented.

But months passed, and there was no word of the reform. It was only toward the end of January that the minister of ownership transformations appointed Andrzej Olechowski his representative for the privatization of the sector. Mr. Olechowski is to draft, within three months, a preliminary project for the structural and ownership transformations of the Polish oil industry.

The Sector on the Starting Line

The restructuring of the fuel sector will take two years, according to experts. That is because the existing organizational structure completely fails to meet the requirements of the market economy. At present, the sector consists of several interrelated elements. The following five enterprises handle shipments of crude petroleum to Polish refineries:

—CIECH (Central Agency for Imports and Exports of Chemicals), a corporation owned by the State Treasury and by refinery and chemical enterprises.

—PERN (Petroleum Pipeline Maintenance Enterprise), a state enterprise. It operates Polish crude petroleum deposits and a pipeline network. It owns the Friendship Pipeline.

—DEC (Cistern Tank Maintenance Directorate). Owned by the CPN (Petroleum Products Center). It leases cistern

trucks for the transportation of crude petroleum and derivatives. It also administers 12,500 railroad cistern cars.

- NAFTOPORT, a corporation whose shares are owned by Commercial Seaport, the Plock and Gdansk refineries, PERN, CIECH, and the CPN. It operates the fuel trans-loading base at the Northern Port.
- PGNIG (Polish Petroleum and Gas Mining Corporation), a state-owned utility that engages in prospecting for oil and gas deposits and imports, and distributes natural gas from the former USSR.
- PKP (Polish State Railroads), not included in the fuel sector.

The following seven refineries process crude petroleum:

- Plock Refinery, opened in 1964. The largest Polish refinery, it accounts for more than 80 percent of the domestic output of petroleum products. It employs 8,400 people.
- Gdansk Refinery, completed in 1975, employs 1,800 people. Since October 1991, it has been a single-person Treasury-owned corporation, with a founding capital of 733 billion zlotys.
- Five older and smaller refineries in southern Poland. They are: Czechowice, Trzebinia, Jaslo, Jedlicze, and Glimar.

The largest domestic distributor of fuels is the Petroleum Products Center (CPN), which operates 1,370 gasoline stations. It accounts for approximately 70-75 percent of wholesale and retail trade in gasolines and 45-50 percent of wholesale and retail trade in diesel fuel. Last year, its sales totaled 12.9 million metric tons of gasolines and 2.2 million metric tons of [diesel fuel?]. The principal gasoline sold was 94-octane ethyl gasoline (more than 1.9 million metric tons). Only 250,000 metric tons of lead-free gasoline were sold. All of the CPN stations are owned by that company, but their ties to it vary. Some operate as agencies of the CPN, while others operate on a commission basis or are leased.

In addition to the CPN, about 2,700 private gasoline stations operate in this country. Most of them, until recently, belonged to manufacturing plants, transportation bases, or state farms. Barely about 600 stations were built from the ground up.

An Outline of an Outline

The restructuring program adopted by the Council of Ministers is very generalized and represents only an outline of the measures to be taken. The first stage of the reform is to be the commercialization of six refineries (other than the Gdansk one, which has already been incorporated). The next stage will be the establishment of Polish Oil Company, Inc., a Treasury company, with 51 percent of the shares to be owned by the Treasury. Polish Oil Company will take over the logo of the CPN and at least 40 percent of its

gasoline stations, along with warehousing and transportation facilities (to be converted to Wholesale Fuel Distribution Enterprise). Polish Oil Company will also take over a 25-to-40-percent share in refineries, chiefly the Gdansk and Plock refineries. The remaining shares will be offered to big international oil concerns, which will also be able to become the owners of the remaining 60 percent of gasoline stations. Polish Oil Company shares are to be offered publicly in the future, with the state retaining a controlling block of shares. As regards the southern refineries, which manufacture specific petroleum products in small batches (for example, the Jedlicze Refinery processes lubricant oils), the program provides for maintaining their output at the existing level—of course, until their privatization.

The construction of a new large refinery in southern Poland is being planned. It is to meet the fuel demand of that part of the country. The "South" Refinery will probably be built in Kedzierzyn-Kozle within the next three years and is scheduled to process 6 million metric tons of crude petroleum annually (3.5 million tons into gasoline and 2.5 million tons into highly processed products, including polyethylene).

Foreign Investors Are Coming

In the opinion of experts, the restructuring of the Polish oil industry requires investing US\$2 to 5 billion within the next few years. But this country lacks the capital needed to finance such a huge undertaking. Therefore, it was decided to allow foreign investors to participate in the Polish market. Interest in Poland has already been expressed by, among others, such companies as DuPont-Conoco, Neste, Esso, Total, Agip, Amoco, and Statoil. They are attracted by the large Polish market of 40 million citizens and about 10 million vehicles, and by the steadily growing demand for fuels (gasoline consumption in the past few years has been growing at the rate of 15 percent annually).

But the problem is that the foreign companies want to invest chiefly in the Gdansk Refinery. That is due to its attractive seashore location and the fact that it is a relatively modern enterprise.

Some foreign companies began to invest by building their own gasoline stations. Near Warsaw, a JET-type DuPont-Conoco gasoline station is already operating; another, owned by the Finnish concern Neste, operates in Zakroczyn; and Esso has invested in still another, in Poznan. These companies stated their desire to establish a network of their own gasoline stations in Poland.

Polish Fears

No reasonable person would deny the need to restructure the fuel sector. But that is as far as the parties involved in this process would go. The effects of this reform, whose details are still not too well known, to be sure, are feared by both the CPN and private entrepreneurs. The CPN fears that it will have to give up its best (and hence also most profitable) gasoline stations. It wants to retain as many of its assets and employees as possible. That is why it has worked out its own program for its transformation into Polish Oil

Company, which is basically in accord with the decisions of the Council of Ministers but also allows for the wishes of its personnel, who are not too enthusiastic about the government's proposals.

As for private entrepreneurs, they fear that the reform will result in eliminating them from the market, on which they have just appeared and to which they are holding on with difficulty. In their opinion, the restructuring program does not make sufficient allowance for the presence of private distributors. They believe that letting foreign investors into the country will result in surrendering the fuel industry to foreign control. They prefer the Philippine model because, in that country, the government restructured the fuel sector by giving preference to small private businesses. According to them, the share of the big oil concerns in the world market does not exceed 50 percent; the remainder is held by small, often family-operated businesses.

The oil industry in Poland is only beginning to change its nature. The first specific projects will begin to be implemented only a few months hence, and we will have to wait a couple of years for the results to show themselves.

*** Debate on Apartment Construction Outlined**

93EP0227B Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA (ECONOMY AND MARKET supplement) in Polish 30 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by Ewa Zychowicz: "The Ministry Is Laying the Rails: Before the Housing Debate"]

[Text] If construction is to be the locomotive of the economy, before firing it with fuel in the form of money we must first lay the rails on which it will efficiently move," said Irena Herbst, secretary of state at the Ministry of Land Use Management and Construction, at the press conference held last Monday at that ministry.

The debate held in the Sejm late last week on the "Assumptions of Housing Policy" already adopted by the government did not satisfy anyone. It satisfied neither the ministry's representatives, who have for a long time been trying to get parliament to accept their housing program, nor the representatives of the constituencies related to the construction industry, who are sharply criticizing those assumptions. The voting on the issue was postponed until 31 March.

The most intransigent opponents of the government's proposal are the SLD [Democratic Left Alliance] deputies, who believe that the marketization of housing, which means higher rents, will result in an increase in the already large number of families that fail to pay housing rents. They thus proposed greater financial assistance for housing buyers and people who build their own dwellings.

In their turn, representatives of the PSL [Polish Peasant Party] accuse the government program of promoting claimant attitudes toward the state in view of its intent to assure housing for every citizen. They postulate the sale of municipal, plant-owned, and cooperative-owned housing to its current tenants, on the principle that housing should be treated as a marketable commodity.

As for the Confederation for an Independent Poland, it believes that the housing problem can be solved only if the currently promoted concept of the economy is discarded in favor of another.

The most frequent criticism voiced throughout the Sejm debate concerned the future nature of the government's program. Most deputies believed that it should be complemented with proposals for a rapid solution of many problems encountered by people waiting for apartments. This chiefly concerns the revaluation of the savings held in special bank accounts set aside for housing applicants, the possibility of granting low-interest housing loans, and debt relief for borrowers whose obligations to the banks often exceed the worth of the housing in question.

Irena Herbst declared that she considers groundless the accusation that the government's proposed future housing policy pays no attention to the present situation. The existing organization of housing construction and maintenance is adapted to the socialist command economy, and, therefore, any funds invested in it would be more or less wasted. Our related laws do not respect property and make no provision for meeting the housing demand through the exchange and sale of housing; neither do they provide for the establishment of new businesses such as construction investors or housing-oriented savings and loan associations. Therefore, the ministry intends to bring about profitable operating conditions for precisely such new institutions by means of suitable implementing regulations and new financing systems.

The Housing Fund Agency will be established to provide low-interest loans for tenant cooperatives. Social Construction Societies will be organized and conditions for the operation of private investors provided. Competition will arise, which will of course be not to the liking of many constituencies viewing it as a threat to their monopoly. The government program is, as it were, an assault on vested interests and, thus, is resulting in the rise of an interest group that will defend the status quo. Cooperative organizations such as the Union of Cooperatives and the Audit Association of Cooperatives already are beginning to understand this. Cooperation with local governments and banks is growing. A new financing system is being created. In Irena Herbst's opinion, the ministry's point of view is gaining supporters. If the ministry is endowed with the right to issue decrees in order to introduce the needed changes, the new system has a chance to begin operating.

*** Meciar's Departure From Government Doubted***93CH0522A Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Slovak 26 Mar 93 p 12*

[Commentary by Milan Zitny: "Is Meciar Irreplaceable?"]

[Text] Following the recent changes in the government, a discussion is under way these days in Slovakia about whether it is at all possible that there could be a change in the office of the prime minister. It is based on President Michal Kovac's argumentation: "Vladimir Meciar called to my attention the fact that, if the proposal for Milan Knazko's recall is rejected, Meciar would give up his office and would not accept my appointment to form the Slovak Government. In my view, if Prime Minister Meciar's proposal is rejected, it could spark a continuous governmental and, consequently, a political crisis."

That view was met with a negative reaction by the Party of Conservative Democrats and the Christian Democratic Movement [KDH]. Ivan Simko, a vice chairman of the KDH, said that, in such a case, someone else would simply have to form the government: "Slovakia's future cannot depend on one single man."

This premise may be valid in general, but, when translated into the current Slovak reality, it seems that the problem turns out to be far more complex, and no simple axiom can resolve it. The first important factor in this puzzle is the deployment of political forces in the parliament. Although the current ratio of votes between the HZDS [Movement for a Democratic Slovakia] and the opposition is 73:75, that does not imply that, for all practical purposes, Meciar heads a minority government. As far as the HZDS is concerned, the opposition is not united also because it contains such politically incompatible factions as the SDL [Party of the Democratic Left] and the KDH. The SNS [Slovak National Party] is basically only a part of the HZDS and not a clear-cut opposition with a different political orientation. Its opposition to Minister of Defense Imrich Andrejcek has no political character but, rather, stems from the dissatisfaction of its member whose aspirations to that office have not been fulfilled.

Another factor is the HZDS deputies' club. Rather than a political movement, it may be regarded as a special-interest association held together by its members' allegiance to power, and power is in the hands of their chairman. If he so ordains, they may rise to lucrative positions; without him, they will be deprived of their chances for the future. Thus, it is improbable that the HZDS might soon split into several factions; for a significant majority, Milan Knazko is not a promising alternative to what the chairman of the HZDS has to offer.

The third and perhaps most important factor is Vladimir Meciar himself. The fourth, complementary consideration stems from the fact that Meciar is aware of that and is why he was able to threaten the president about Knazko with his already classic dictum: "Either he or I!" Slovak politics have gathered abundant experience with such tactics, but, thus far, no one has been able to cope with them effectively.

After the prime minister's first recall and the breakup of the VPN [Public Against Violence], the KDH could assume power only because at that particular moment the club of its deputies was the strongest, and, moreover, it was supported by what was left of the VPN. Nevertheless, the situation today looks different. Should Meciar step down and refuse to form a new government, he and his HZDS would turn into the opposition, and, from that moment, the National Council of the Slovak Republic would be unable to pass any laws. For that reason, it seems that there is no alternative but to leave power in Meciar's hands. He will be especially strongly tempted to abuse it when foreign currency reserves are completely exhausted and no remedial measures are on hand. Then, in principle, the prime minister will have two options at his discretion: either resign and admit the failure of his role, or adopt repressive measures, with the justification that Slovakia's enemies are the cause of its problems. People familiar with his temperament have an inkling which of the two alternatives Vladimir Meciar would choose. In any case, Meciar himself must decide when it is time for him to depart. Judging from previous experiences, it may be said that the prime minister is not one of those who can be "made to go."

*** Director of Slovak Radio Talks About His Job***93CH0504A Bratislava KULTURNY ZIVOT in Slovak 24 Mar 93 p 3*

[Interview with Vladimir Stefko, director of Slovak Broadcast, by Lubomir Sebesta; place and date not given: "To Me, a Citizen Is More Important Than the Government"]

[Text] *The role of mass communications media as a phenomenon of human society is often either overestimated or underestimated. In either case, it is hard to imagine our civilization without them, particularly in these hectic times, as confirmed by the increased interest of Slovak grass roots and power structures in the mass media. Along with television, Slovak Broadcast could not escape their attention. I think that, over the past three years, it has experienced so many pesky problems that they could fill a tome. As director of that institution, Dr. Vladimir Stefko, Candidate of Science (born in 1942), lived through the thick and thin of it.*

After his graduation from the Philosophy Department at Comenius University in Bratislava, he launched his career in 1964 in the SMENA daily, where he "pulled himself up" to the editorial position in the cultural section. In 1969-74, he turned to television, and there his career ended for reasons so popular at that time—he was fired. Next, he got involved in two publications, JAVISKO and NOVE SLOVO, and, finally, toward the end of the 1980's, he founded DIALOG, a magazine focusing on theater, film, television, and radio. Since 1990, he has remained loyal to radiobroadcasting. However, we are interested, above all, in the current, frequently heated situation.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] It is axiomatic that, as an important mass communications institution, Slovak Broadcast could

not remain untouched by the events of 1989. What is its current position toward our public and our power structures?

[Stefko] Your question is very simple. I will answer it by saying that, since 1 July 1991, Slovak Broadcast has been licensed as a public corporation. However, it is important to underscore what "licensed public corporation" means because, to date, the term has not been widely used in our country. To this day, our law has neither provided a sufficiently precise definition of the term nor encoded it in the system of legal concepts and norms.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] Consequently, it is obvious that we should look to advanced Western democracies for an explanation of the term "public corporation." I presume that you, too, have sought inspiration there.

[Stefko] Of course. After all, in the West, public corporations are entirely a matter of fact. They are institutions independent of the powers of state and only indirectly subjected to the supervision of the parliament. By the same token, they are regarded—and this is the most essential fact—as a public service. In other words, in no instance do they serve the government, political parties, movements, or other authorities. At the same time, according to the principle of public corporation, they (including radiobroadcasts) are required to produce a broad spectrum of programs covering information, culture, and art. Furthermore, they are required to include in their programs all public, generational, and social strata and relevant groups, including the minorities. For instance, Slovak Broadcast is also a member of EBU (European Broadcasting Union), which adheres to those principles. At the same time, the EBU principle demands that radiobroadcast be accessible to the listeners over the entire territory of the state in question. Therefore, as a public corporation, Slovak Broadcast must now comply with all of those criteria.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] In other words, having attained that status, is the situation of Slovak Broadcast similar to that of advanced countries?

[Stefko] Naturally, no one can say that everything is just great and in perfect order. However, when we started to work toward those objectives in January 1990, we proceeded from the premise that it is rather simple and easy to destroy an institution, but that it is an extremely time-consuming and painstaking process to build a new one. For that reason, we opted for a gradual, step-by-step method, knowing that we risked making mistakes and dissatisfying both our listeners and governmental agencies. At any rate, our status as a public corporation means that the government is not directly involved in the operation and management of Slovak Broadcast. In compliance with Law No. 255/1991 of the Slovak National Council and its subsequent amendment, parliament appointed the nine-member Council of Slovak Broadcast to oversee the basic strategic tasks and objectives of our radio. However, it has another, extremely important obligation—to safeguard the political and social independence of this particular medium.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] Thus, the Slovak Government no longer has direct managerial links to radio, although it subsidizes its operation from the state budget. Nonetheless, economic dependence at one level usually means that it comes with certain ties at another....

[Stefko] It is true that we are not a self-supporting organization. I should like to use again as an example the countries where public corporations have an old tradition. That type of radiobroadcast is completely independent in economic terms for the main reason that its listeners are so disciplined that they pay licensing fees high enough to cover a substantial part of radio's annual budget. At the same time, those corporations develop their own economic programs (for instance, various services, rentals, commercials, brokerage, and so forth), which supplement their budgets, and they are thus not dependent on the state budget. At this moment, however, neither radio nor television in Slovakia can survive without subsidies because, on the one hand, the advertising market and other commercial ventures have not been properly developed (although the situation is gradually improving), and, on the other, the old, inadequate laws still govern the licensing fees. Consequently, every year we are losing millions and millions of korunas [Sk] because "black" listeners do not pay even the Sk20 per month at a time when daily papers cost Sk3 or 4. Our radio is on the air 24 hours a day on four frequencies. Thus, for a small daily fee, one gets not only what is in the papers but also lots of music, youth, art and educational programs, and so forth. The whole problem is that, although our laws stipulate the duty to pay the licensing fees (I should like to mention that our listeners and viewers do not pay for the broadcasts, as they often mistakenly believe, but only the administrative charges for the right to use a radio or television receiver), they fail to mention any method of control or the sanctions for noncompliance. Thus, the difference between the number of households that own a radio and those that are paying may be as high as 400,000. If you multiply that by Sk20 and by 12 months, it adds up to a considerable amount. Therefore, our intention to become economically independent is not so unrealistic. In my estimation, it could be achieved in about three years, but, for the time being, Slovak Broadcast receives from the state budget grants that cover 15 to 20 percent of our needs, which is not such a huge sum. This year, we also received, for the first time, a special grant in the amount of Sk20 million to set up foreign broadcast, which for us is a completely new venture. On 4 January, we began broadcasting programs for our countrymen abroad, and, on 29 March, we will start offering English-, French-, German-, and Russian-language programs, as well.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] Therefore, Slovak Broadcast will have to wait for its economic independence. Its political and social independence is protected by the Council for Slovak Broadcast, but, according to quite widespread views, it may not necessarily prove immune against the influence of outside powers.

[Stefko] The story about the establishment of the current council is not without interest. In the early 1990, when we were preparing an application to be licensed as a public

corporation, we envisioned the council as a team with a few members representing Slovak science, culture, education, public life, and so on—and, of course, politically unaffiliated. Alas, the time was not ripe for any such model. The result was a kind of miniparliament. Every party represented in the parliament was represented there; our radio had four members, the government appointed three members, and three more members represented the Advisory Committee (since abolished by an amendment to the law). Furthermore, the Advisory Committee included members of parties not represented in the parliament, such as religious denominations and churches, cultural and public associations, and organizations and various special-interest groups. In its final form, it was an assembly of more than 100 members, which, of course, could not be flexible and effective enough. Moreover, the ambitions of the members affected radio operations almost to the point where they would divide radio into individual sectors under their personal management. We simply felt that they regarded our radio executives as mere office help. Accordingly, within the council, everyone was fighting, above all, for his or her party colors. In all fairness, I should mention that, unlike the television council, which was the scene of major clashes, the radio council was at least able to keep working, despite attempts to control information and publicity—the “Radio-journal” program, for instance. By the same token, there was practically no interest in other radio operations—culture, arts, youth, and so forth—which, by the way, are stipulated by the law. As I already noted, an amendment to the pertinent law abolished the advisory group; the current council has nine members, who represent mainly our culture and who are not affiliated with any political party. Although in its new composition the council is only starting operation, I have not noticed any attempts to directly interfere with radio’s personal or programmatic matters. I think the members understand their mission, which is primarily the duty to safeguard radio’s independence.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] Thus, the three-year process of making Slovak Broadcast independent is going in the right direction. It needs to stabilize its situation particularly because it must compete, for instance, with private radio stations not only for advertisements but also, and especially for, listeners.

[Stefko] In this context, I should like to mention that Slovak Broadcast has never objected to a dual principle of radio-broadcasting. We have never opposed it. It is clear that there will be—and already are—private radio stations competing with us in both areas you mentioned. However, I am not afraid of any headlong competitive collisions so long as both sides play their cards fair and square and do not attack one another in other media, although, unfortunately, certain newspapers are already involved in a kind of gossip- and slander-mongering against Slovak Broadcast. In this conjunction, it should be clear that private radio stations are purely commercial enterprises, whose main purpose is to make profit. On the other hand, Slovak Broadcast is a public corporation, which means that, in accordance with the law and EBU principles, it must also provide expensive artistic programs. We must tape Mozart’s symphonies, radio plays,

or folkloristic programs, which private stations do not have to do. It is a mistake to think that plurality and democracy will be guaranteed if several private stations compete with Slovak Broadcast because stations that are not subject to control can broadcast whatever they want so long as they do not violate the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms and the laws of our Republic. Metaphorically speaking, their broadcast can wear a one-color uniform but ours cannot. Therefore, private stations are fine, no question about it, but they must act correctly among themselves and toward Slovak Broadcast. However, I am against any competition that proceeds from the premise that the worse our broadcast seems to public eyes, the more we paint it black, the more people from it we recruit for our side, the more we copy its programs (all of which has already happened), the better it is for the private stations.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] Many people somewhat automatically also count Rock FM Radio and Radio CD International among private stations and, consequently, among your competitors.

[Stefko] First of all, those radio stations are not private but program circuits of Slovak Broadcast. Radio CD International was launched in December 1989 by an agreement on cooperation concluded by the former director of Czechoslovak Broadcast with its Austrian partners. Actually, we inherited it. It does not compete with our private stations because its programs are in the German language and designated primarily for Austria. Neither can we speak of a private station as concerns Rock FM Radio. It is our band that was set up because we needed a station that would broadcast nonpolitical programs, light music, and news briefs intended mainly for young people. But, because we lacked sufficient financial resources to put it in operation, we joined forces with an English partner in a corporation, with a 50-50 share. The cooperation did not work out, however, and we managed to wriggle out, which was neither easy nor pleasant. But because it was already on air, we began looking for another partner. In the end, we chose the same company with which we are running Radio CDI. This time, however, we hold a larger share in the corporation because the previous solution turned out to be disadvantageous. The rumors about Rock FM Radio obviously stem from the fact that it is the only station of its type that covers practically the whole territory of Slovakia, and, therefore, it poses major competition to privately owned stations. To be precise, I should add that the corporation produces only programs according to our instructions and that it operates on medium frequencies.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] We discussed the attitude of radio to power and vice versa. But because you are a director, “sitting” in the same chair for nearly three years, what about your own attitude to those structures? Don’t you feel all kinds of pressure, particularly because a merry-go-round of personnel changes in our state administration and other agencies is going on at full speed in our country?

[Stefko] Well, some pressures have always been felt in the past, are felt now, and will always be felt in the future. Yet, in all fairness, I would say that, especially when we tried to

implement the principle of public corporation, our efforts were never opposed by any government—whether the prime minister was Cic, Meciar, Carnogursky, or Meciar again. So there is no opposition against the status of broadcasting as a public corporation. Naturally, every power would like to exert some influence on this particular medium, or, to put it mildly, to use it to its advantage. Perhaps I have stayed so long in this office because, right from the start, I focused myself, my colleagues, and radio precisely on the idea of a public corporation. That being the case, we did not run for advice to party secretariats or to the government. In simple

terms, our radio has never gravitated toward a single political institution in an attempt to be fair. My point of departure is that, no matter what the result of the election may be, it cannot affect our broadcasting—whether in terms of personnel, programs, or our focus on the citizen. For me, a citizen is more important than the government.

[KULTURNY ZIVOT] In conclusion, may we have your personal credo?

[Stefko] In one phrase: to act like a human being in any situation.

Macedonia

*** Macedonian, Greek Intellectuals Meet in Ohrid**
93BA0863B Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in
Macedonian 27 Mar 93 p 2

[Article by Z. Skerlev and T. Mircevski: "United Against the Division of Nations in the Balkans"]

[Text] Regardless of differences in their interests, the nations want to live together. If a dialogue is wanted, we must proceed on the basis of reality. Unacceptable vocabulary used by Greek spokesmen. The visit of Greek intellectuals means a border without visas. A time during which the Greek government has tried to create hatred for its neighbors. Joint text addressed to the Security Council sought.

Ohrid, 26 March

Dialogue is the only possible way of leaving behind the situation to which we have been brought by present policies, national blindness, and intolerance. Regardless of differences in their interests, the Balkan nations can live together and the role of the intellectuals is to lead in the struggle against any division among the nations which live in the Balkans, regardless of its origins. Those were the statements with which today, in Ohrid, the meeting of the 50 Macedonian and Greek intellectuals continued. This meeting was organized by the Macedonian Human Rights Forum and the Greek Committee for Dialogue Among the Citizens of the Balkans.

This day was spent in debating the questions which were raised the previous evening mainly by the Greek representatives, concerning the absence of Albanian intellectuals, and the agreement of the views of Macedonian intellectuals with the official policy, as well as the insufficient emphasis on critical reports concerning problems of nationalism in Macedonia, and addressing the issue of finding specific ways of resolving the problems existing between the two nations.

Manipulations With the Census in Greece

The key of the problem is the fact that with the recognition of Macedonia there will be a recognition of the Macedonians. This is what the official Greek policy fears, Ljubomir Cuculovski said in his presentation. In connection with the remarks on the uncritical attitude shown by the Macedonian intellectuals and the critical nature displayed by the Greeks, he said that we do not dare to allow ourselves to become involved in such games, for it was emphasized that although nationalistic forces exist in Macedonia, they are not in power or within the government. Panajotis Dimitras spoke on the rights of minorities which, in his view, must be respected. He stressed that similar efforts are being made by the European Community, which is drafting a special document on the various ethnic groups in the Balkans. He said that the main reason for manipulations involving the question of the existence or nonexistence of a Macedonian minority in Greece is that the official authorities have not made the census data public. We envy Macedonia, Dimitras said, which found the strength, after

the recent partial census conducted by the European Community, to ask for a new census. In answering, the professor of constitutional law of the university in Salonika, who said that she was not familiar with any article in the Greek Constitution dealing with minority rights, Borce Davitkovski cited Article 49 of the Macedonian Constitution and Article 108 of the Greek Constitution which stipulate that the Greek State is concerned with the living conditions of its citizens abroad and of their ties to the fatherland, their education and their social and professional advancement. He stressed that Macedonian and Greek experts could study, word for word, these two articles and would be unable to find any essential difference between them.

Tomislav Cokrevski tried to explain the view of the forum on human rights, which is totally independent of official policy. He said that in Macedonia it is a question of a specific situation. We are struggling to ensure the survival of our own state and we cannot "jointly" oppose this regime, when the regime is struggling for the same objectives. In a situation in which we are literally strangled on all sides, the situation in Macedonia has not led to a war and nationalistic structures are not predominant. We may not agree on some issues, Cokrevski said, but we must display tolerance.

The Vergina Symbol

We are among those who mention the negative nature of Greek policy and Greek nationalists which gives us a great deal of problems, stressed Mihalios Gramopoulos. Nationalism is a disease and it is easier to have a negative look at such a disease which may afflict a neighbor, but more difficult to notice within our own midst. Pointing out to the Macedonian intellectuals their insufficient level of criticism, he mentioned the Vergina emblem which is part of the Macedonian flag, stressing that this kind of "provocation" could have been avoided. The problem does not lie exclusively in the maps of greater Macedonia that are being printed here, Gramopoulos said. We require more proof of the way you confront nationalism, for this would be a strong argument that we could use in the struggle against our own nationalists. He called for opposing the views of government, views which divide the peoples in the Balkans and create hatred, but are being underestimated.

In answering Gramopoulos, Vanjo Hadziev said that there still exists misunderstandings between the two countries. By keeping track of writings and conditions in Greece and Macedonia, he has noted that in Macedonia a sharp struggle is being waged between nationalists and antinationalists. Expressing his view that the symbol on the flag could not be specifically the Vergina emblem, he pointed out that 15 other countries in Europe have a cross on their flag and no one has had a problem with this. Hadziev critically referred to the vocabulary used by the Greek media, expressing his displeasure with the fact that Macedonians have been described as "monkeys" and "Gypsies" while President Gligorov has been described as a "mafioso" and a "drug trafficker." An end must be put to such things, for they are below the dignity of any civilized nation.

In pointing out to the organizers that, unlike the situation in Athens, the meeting in Ohrid lacked "demos," i.e., a public,

Agelos Elephandis said that the problem existing between the two nations is political but that he saw no problem in Macedonians calling themselves Macedonians for, he said, we, Greeks, are also faced with the problem of nonrecognition, when we were considered only a "black hole" on the geographic map of the Balkans, although now we seem to have forgotten this fact. In speaking of the offensive mounted by Greek official policy and the use of teams of experts whose purpose was to prove that the Macedonians are the people of Skopje and that "Macedonia is a petty little country," he gave a positive assessment of the latest international events in relations between the two countries, stressing that the Balkan people are doomed to coexist and that the vision of the intellectuals who came here from Greece is to have a border without visas and problems and build a big community of peoples of united Europe.

Promoting Hatred

At the meeting held that day, the presentation by the young Panajotas Toubanis, member of the Leadership of the Greek Student Union, drew particular attention. I would like, he said, from the very beginning for the Macedonians not to look to Greece as an enemy, for I too am a victim of Greece's mistaken policy. The victim of the first target of Greek propaganda was the youth. We have lived under such conditions for one and a half years, a time during which the Greek Government has tried to promote hatred of its neighbors. Throughout all this time we lived with a pseudohistory of the past, according to which the Greeks are a superior nation.

Our Macedonian neighbors were depicted as arms and drugs merchants and the "Skopje people" have been depicted in the blackest possible terms, living in a place where poverty is terrible and unendurable. This was followed by the dissemination of a variety of ideas to nurture nationalism, up to the level of fascism. Nonetheless, the major economic problems of the country are creating fruitful grounds for the claim that it is precisely the refugees and the neighboring countries that are the main culprits for this situation, rather than the Greek authorities. According to Toubanis, different ideas are persecuted, and their supporters end up in jail. A high percentage of the young Greeks, unfortunately, have accepted the historical argument against Macedonia. Nonetheless, a high percentage of such young people, who do not wish war, agree with granting Macedonia the right to its own name. This is because no one can question the right to self-determination of a nation. In discussing the problems of the Greeks, he said that any change on their part would also lead to war. With a view to developing cooperation between the two countries, among other things, Toubanis suggested meetings between university and secondary-school students, and young workers from both countries.

Teuta Krasnica-Cuckova suggested that the women of Athens and Salonika meet. Such a meeting should eventually develop into a Balkan meeting of women.

"The Balkans as a Bridge"

Andonis Gazis, from Crete, said that these discussions show that the two countries are not too different in their views.

We must help resolve the problems that are being caused by the two governments, the Greek government above all. You, he said, have tried to resolve the problem, but, at the same time would like to emphasize your independence. However, the differences between these two views have not been entirely eliminated. For the past 70 years of the existence of our state we have been developing an identity, and I believe that you have not succeeded in doing so in two years. Stressing his respect for Gligorov, he said that many people in Greece particularly value him, especially for opposing the climate of enmity between the two countries. In order to surmount it we must join views, the more so since both countries have their own intellectuals and analytical forces. In concluding, he called for drafting a joint text asking the United Nations and the Security Council to respect such views and the permanence of borders between the two countries. In order to find the path of reciprocal understanding, he suggested that the next meeting be held in Athens, in the next couple of months. The issues and the sequence in which they will be discussed should be set in advance.

Luan Starova, who had studied the ties among the Balkan nations in the past, read his essay "The Balkans as a Bridge" or "The Cursed Fence." As intellectuals, we have at our disposal the weapon of reason, he said, adding that the Balkans remain a traditional preserve of ethnic intolerance. The latest views, used as a new argument are that while Europe is uniting the Balkans remain the Balkans, an area of blood and hatred, where people and hopes are killed. In conclusion, he said that there is no problem for the Macedonian intellectuals in terms of cooperation and that they do not wish to find themselves in the storm of war.

In seeking an answer to the question of why did the problem of the recognition of Macedonia with its own name arose, Kourkoutis Kostas said that it is clear that no one disputes the right of a nation to self-determination. I believe, he said, that this problem can be resolved through compromise. Greece has an advantage as member of the EC. However, this cannot be used in trying to achieve an understanding among Balkan peoples. In order for us not to find ourselves at the bottom of Europe, inter-Balkan cooperation must be secured.

Among others, Nano Ruzin mentioned that this meeting must be considered a meeting between two civilized societies. Democracy, he said, is inseparable from dialogue. If a dialogue is necessary about the Balkans, in his view, we must ignore history which is creating a number of problems. However, if we want a dialogue, we must also base ourselves on the reality of our own society and not on that of our neighbor. Among others, he suggested that such discussions should include the participation of business people, businessmen, and others.

Tomorrow the participants in the meeting have a free day, and we were told by the organizers that if they believe it necessary the Macedonian and Greek intellectuals can continue their discussions on Sunday.

[Box, p 2]

Nationalism Is a Cancer

Especially inspiring was the talk given by Father Stevan Sandzakovski who, speaking of the senselessness of such divisions and the consequences which they create, condemned nationalism as a "cancer in the bodies of our two ethnic groups." He called for tolerance, understanding, and respect, stating that the Hellenic spirit which is profoundly inherent in the Greeks, is inherent in the Macedonian people as well.

Also noteworthy was the presentation by Dimitras Panajotis who condemned in very sharp terms the current Greek policy and its insistence on "remaining the slaves of history and not becoming the builders of the future." Among others, he mentioned that it is not proper to draw up maps of greater Macedonia, but it is also not proper for Greek young people, in the same context, lately to be dancing to and singing a very popular song recorded in English, in which base terms are used for Skopje and for President Gligorov, a song which is being played by all Greek radio stations.

[Box, p 2]

Helsinki Committee Support

Meto Jovanovski read to the participants a telegram received from Jose Palau from Spain, who is member of the Helsinki Committee.

In addition to the greetings, the telegram states that the Helsinki Committee is prepared to cooperate. It greets and supports the initiative of the discussions. Furthermore, the latest meeting of that important European institution also dealt with the issue of "major inter-Balkan cooperation," which included this meeting of intellectuals from the two countries.

Greek Cleric on Slavic Macedonian Minority

93BA0863A Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in
Macedonian 28 Mar 93 p 3

[Interview with Archimandrite Nikodimos Carknjas by Aleksandar Damovski; place and date not given: "From Best Priest to 'Agent of Skopje'"]

[Text] *The main objective of the Macedonian Movement for Balkan Prosperity is the exercise of human rights by Macedonians in Greece. I believe that today more than 1 million Macedonians live in the Aegean part of Macedonia. Greece is not afraid of the name but of acknowledging that another ethnic group also lives in its own country.*

Archimandrite Nikodimos Carknjas, from the Aegean part of Macedonia, has become a symbol of Macedonian insubordination to Greece. Deeply believing in and consulting biblical and canonic principles, never violating the ordinary political church requirements, Father Nikodimos has remained loyal to the teachings of the Apostle Paul, according to which we are all the same in the eyes of God, in spite, as he says himself, the latest slogan launched by the Greek Holy Synod of Bishops, according to which whoever

is not a Greek is not a Christian! Stating that, personally, he is a Macedonian and a Greek citizen but also a Christian, only a few years ago (the date was 22 May 1988), as one of the best priests in the Kukus Archbishopric, Father Nikodimos earned one of the highest church distinctions in Greece: the Holy Cross. One year ago, however, at the very start of his promotion to bishop, he became unemployed. From one of the best priests in the Greek Church, Nikodimos all of a sudden became an "agent of Skopje," an "autonomist," a "homosexual," and a "Godless person," only because he has always and everywhere stated that he is a Macedonian and that he intends to fight for honoring the commitments assumed by the Greek State in signing a number of international documents on the protection of human rights and the rights of national minorities.

He described these ideas in the church newspaper TA MOGLENA which began publication in 1978 and, for quite some time, was the only medium in Greece reporting on the status of and discrimination against the Macedonian ethnic minority in that country. Since recently, without any official prohibition but using already tried Greek Secret Police methods, this time applied to the owner of the press which printed the newspaper, TA MOGLENA ceased publication.

[Carknjas] The owner of the press told me, personally, that he does not believe that the threats will be implemented. However, he also said that he does not want to take any risks. It has now been one year since the newspaper, financed by voluntary contributions of Macedonians, has not been published.

[Damovski] You are also a member of the upper leadership of the Macedonian Movement for Balkan Prosperity, which is headquartered in Sbotsko. When was this movement established and has it been registered with the Greek authorities?

[Carknjas] The movement has been functioning for slightly over a year. Two months ago, a central meeting of the movement was held at which its executive committee was elected. The main objective of the movement is the exercise of human rights by Macedonians living in Greece, schooling in their native language, and having churches in which services will be freely held in the Macedonian language and will be under the jurisdiction of the MPC [Macedonian Orthodox Church]....

The movement has still not been registered by the Greek authorities any more than has the cultural society in Lerin. A large number of our members are having problems with the Greek Secret Police. They are being subjected to economic pressure, threats, telephone calls, loss of state jobs, and daily provocations....

[Damovski] What is the current situation of Macedonians in Greece? To what extent has their situation changed, considering the current hostile clashes between the two neighbors?

[Carknjas] In villages with a Macedonian population, for example, there are no problems concerning the freedom to speak in Macedonian on the street. The problem is greater in mixed settlements, where one-half are Macedonian while the other are Prosvidji (resettled Greek population from the

Caucasus—editors). In such places the fear of freely speaking in one's native tongue is still present, as it is in the larger cities.

[Damovski] According to you, what is the size of the Macedonian population in Greece?

[Carknjas] In my view, there are about 1 million to 1.2 million Macedonians in Greece, who have not had any rights from as far back as 1913. For example, even the right to be educated in one's native language, officially granted in 1925, has never been exercised. A primer was printed, but it never reached the schools.

[Damovski] For the past year you have been unemployed. Why?

[Carknjas] Simply because I am fighting for the human rights of the Macedonians in the Aegean part of Macedonia. Before losing my job, I was asked to cooperate with the Secret Police in exchange for the title of bishop. Having refused such cooperation, a campaign was launched against me in the press and, all of a sudden, one of the best priests in the bishopric became a renegade. However, the people should be asked about this. I was one of the initiators in the building of a new church in St. Atanas Village. After five years of construction, it was completed as planned by the church synod. However, I was blamed for this act also by the Greek authorities, who said that it was no accident that the church resembled the cathedral in Skopje. Regrettably, the Greek Synod is involved much more in politics than in religion.

[Damovski] In your view, what is the reason for the Greek opposition to the international recognition of the Republic of Macedonia by that name?

[Carknjas] I believe that the main reason is the existence of Macedonians in Greece. Greece does not fear the name but fears to acknowledge that another ethnic group lives in that country as well. It is indeed incredible that on the threshold of the 21st century, in a state which considers itself the cradle of democracy, such things may happen. The purpose of the movement is not in the least to change the borders. Its objective is not to have a Greater Macedonia, as the Secret Police tries to present matters, but merely to ensure the exercise of human rights. On the one hand, the idea is being promoted that in Macedonia the people have nothing to eat and that there is great poverty, on the other, that same propaganda states that we are "Skopje mercenaries" or "agents...."

* Juvenile Black Marketeers Active in Skopje

93BA0841B Skopje VECER in Macedonian 15 Mar 93
p 3

[Article by J. Pavlovski: "Dealers Are Black Marketeering and Bosses Are Making Money"]

[Text] *An increasing number of "bosses" are purchasing large amounts of cigarettes and, using juvenile dealers, sell them illegally on the markets.*

There are indications that people engaged in cigarette production and marketing, and even state officials, are involved in this kind of black market.

The illegal trade, or the black market, in cigarettes in our country has assumed new and even greater proportions after several months of calm. As long as not only timely but even harsh legitimate steps are taken (the Union tobacco law is still in effect), the possibility exists for the black marketeers to become richer at the expense of the impoverishment of the state.

Apparently, no one either wants to nor can stop such an activity that has earned its specific name of "black-market commerce," for the present time at least. Domestically produced or imported cigarettes are being sold in all the open markets in Skopje at a price half that charged by the retail stores, while the black-market network has expanded to other cities and tourist areas.

Who Is Engaged in the Black Market?

There seems to be no answer to this question. It is mostly minors, with nylon bags filled with domestic and foreign cigarettes who are mainly showing up at the markets, while the real owners of the cigarettes remain secret. Although this is nothing new, the state authorities do not make sufficient efforts to unravel it.

Both informal discussions and slanders contain some of the truth, and no one but the police and the inspecting authorities are in a position to establish it. According to Ilija Crvenkovski, an adviser to Makedonija Tabak, in the Republic, mainly in Skopje, there may be some 1,000 "bosses" who have stored in their own premises hundreds of kilograms of cigarettes they market without paying any business tax, with the help of juveniles operating in the markets.

Ilija Petreski, tobacco products marketing director, and Danco Suturkov, deputy general director of Makedonija Tabak, most responsibly claim that their organization is totally uninvolved in the growth of the cigarette black market in the Republic. The cigarettes they sell in the Republic are stamped with the letter "M" and the sales tax on them has been paid in advance, for which reason they cannot be sold at a lower price; the cigarettes for export are shipped out with declarations and accompanied by the people of their organization to the border.

Koco Argirovski believes that everything proceeds normally up to the border point and in the sale of cigarettes inside the Republic. Yet, despite this statement, such cigarettes are being sold in our market at half the price! Whatever the case, this is a clever black-market operation, the detection and interruption of which must be the exclusive concern of the state authorities, for Makedonija Tabak, as a marketing organization, loses nothing. It is only the state that loses from the unpaid sales tax.

Inability and Cleverness

Although there is some suspicion that some tobacco enterprises are involved in such forbidden trade in tobacco

products, they claim to be working honestly and within the law. They believe that the blame falls on the inspecting authorities. According to Tome Atanasovski, adviser to the executive commission of the Macedonian Chamber of Commerce, the reason is the inability or sluggishness of the inspecting authorities in blocking such trade. He says that the federal tobacco law is still in effect, and calls for strict penalties for engaging in black-market operations with tobacco and tobacco products, despite the fact that the black marketeers feel at home in the markets, as though no one could harm them.

Conversely, Lazar Kujumdziev, deputy chief commercial inspector at the Republic Inspectorate of the Ministry of the Economy, claims that the inspectors who are involved in breaking the black market work normal working hours while the clandestine trade goes on at all times. The dealers can identify the inspectors as they come and move or, if caught red handed, break into a run, leaving their goods behind. In this respect they are faster than the inspectors. What they may lose by leaving behind a few packs of cigarettes they recover by picking up other loads hidden elsewhere and continue to sell.

Makedonija Tabak, Jugotutun, and the inspection authorities stress that the legal deadline for the sale of the cigarettes the dealers sell on the markets (nine months) has not expired. If such is the case, the question indeed arises as to how are they being supplied with them. Unquestionably, there is an answer to this but there seems to be a lack of involvement in preventing such trade.

It is public knowledge that cigarettes for export leave the country legally. However, the moment they are on the other side, instead of being sold and pay the sales tax of the other country, using circuitous ways and tractors, combines, other types of transportation, and even on horseback, they are returned to their places of origin, mainly in the warehouses of the black-market gangs. These are cigarettes produced in Macedonia. But from where and how do inexpensive imported cigarettes come from? It is precisely the people who are engaged in this trade that have registered private enterprises and purchase cigarettes from other countries, hide the cigarettes somewhere, cross the border, and then transfer the cigarettes at illegal crossing points at suitable times.

Drastic Penalties for Black Marketeers

However, there is yet another matter in which those who produce and sell cigarettes, and even state officials, are involved. Such people inform the bosses in advance that the prices of some items will go up. The bosses invest huge funds in stocking up their own stores with more goods. Subsequently, instead of increasing the prices of these goods and paying to the state the difference in the sales tax, they keep their additional profits and, through their own dealers, on the markets, sell inexpensive fresh cigarettes.

Some people become very rich from such illegal transactions, while impoverishing the state. Last summer alone, the state lost about 20 million German marks from such trade and just as much from the black-market trade in alcohol.

This year such exports, which apply above all to cigarettes, and to the extent to which the police is not involved in stopping them, for the police are in charge of illegality and order, while the inspecting authorities work one shift only and with fewer officials, the budget may be hit even worse and may lose, from cigarettes alone 3.5-4 billion denars. In order to avoid this, the inspectorate intends to increase controls in order to block the open and illegal sale of cigarettes on the markets and to identify the bosses and their assistants, for which purpose the Ministry of the Economy has issued a regulation on drastically increasing penalties.

[Box, p 3]

An Entire Salary for a Pack of Cigarettes

The prohibited trade in cigarettes, according to the proper authorities, will no longer be tolerated. According to the regulation issued by the Ministry of the Economy, stricter measures will be taken and penalties will be increased for people engaged in illegal cigarette trade, especially regarding failure to pay the sales tax. As in the past, dealers caught illegally selling cigarettes in the markets will have their goods confiscated. They will be fined on the spot and so will those who buy the inexpensive cigarettes. Such penalties will equal an average monthly wage. According to the estimates of the Ministry of Finance, this will amount to 133,400 denars. Fines imposed on those who have concealed inexpensive cigarettes before the latest price increases and who sell cigarettes without paying the tax will range between five and 15 paychecks, confiscation of the stock, and criminal prosecution in court.

*** Control Over Cigarette Sales in Macedonia**

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Macedonian 12 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Article by Borjana Dicevska: "The State Lacks Efficient Control"]

[Text] *After three months of calm, once again illegal trade in cigarettes is flourishing in the Republic and neither the police, nor the inspectorate, nor any other state authorities have been able to block such trade and discover the channels along which the cigarettes are moving. Do we have a financial police or a quota system?*

After a quiet period of three months, the unregulated sale of cigarettes in the Republic is flourishing once again. Such prohibited trade is strongest in Skopje where a variety of street vendors are freely reselling cigarettes in the markets of Bunjakovec, Taftalidze, Bit Pazar, and the open market. They are already spreading elsewhere as well: in tourist centers, nightclubs, and, frequently, people carrying loaded nylon bags, knock at the doors of private houses offering a variety of "Lord," "Partner," "X-B," "Boss," "Marlboro," and other brands at half the regular price.

Neither the police, nor the inspectorate, nor the other state authorities have been able to block them and to discover the channels along which the cigarettes are being illegally shipped. On the contrary, the black-market trade in cigarettes remains an unresolved problem, for instead of

mounting an operation for exposing all such crimes and abuses, responsibility is being switched around. According to some, the culprits are "corrupt customs officials"; others blame "the indifference shown by the executive branch of the state" to adopting comprehensive regulations; others again claim that the main culprits are the "tobacco enterprises and Makedonijatabak, the only organization in the Republic engaged in cigarette sales." With all such charges, little thought is being given to a very dangerous and widespread occurrence: Minor children are participating in this organized black market of selling cigarettes. Let us not even mention who the biggest loser is from such illegal trade.

Sale of Reserves

On 9 November last, the Macedonian government issued several regulations on the payment of the sales tax on some goods. This led to certain changes in the previous computation of the tax to be paid for tobacco sales. More specifically, processed tobacco, whether produced or imported and earmarked for sale in Macedonia, had to be branded with the letter "M." Furthermore, the regulation prohibited the sale of cigarettes outside places of business. The taxpayer was asked to pay the cigarette tax within five days after being paid himself, and no less than 45 days after receiving the customer's order. According to the cigarette sales tax regulation, the taxpayer had no right to place an order and transport the cigarettes without a tax-paid certificate issued by the proper authorities or sell them without being listed in the tax registers.

These tax changes made by the government were consistent with the need to stop the illegal sale of cigarettes. In this context we cannot ignore either the pressure applied by Makedonijatabak, the customs authorities, and the shipping service. This is confirmed by the three-month-long lull in selling cigarettes on the black market. Then, despite all such steps, of late this black market in cigarettes reached new dimensions with a tendency to expand even further.

According to Danco Suturkov, deputy general director of Makedonijatabak, we are dealing here with new machinations, new channels, and new malversations. "Do we now, as an enterprise, abandon our main activities and become inspectors, policemen, customs agents, and so on, and expose all such illegal transactions when we have state authorities that should be concerned with their prompt detection and elimination. Here, at Makedonijatabak, everything is controlled and is done according to the law, and the charges that we are involved in cigarette black marketeering are groundless. Not a single cigarette not identified with the letter 'M' or without sales tax paid can come out of our enterprise. In my view, currently, the appearance of cigarettes on the black market is the result of old stocks previously purchased at the old prices which are now appearing on the Republic's market. It is only thus that the manipulators avoid paying the difference in the estimated tax on the old and the new prices. That is also why whenever the price of cigarettes goes up, black market and illegal trade appear. Otherwise, with the right tax on the regular price, no one would be able to sell cigarettes at half the price, let us say, sell a pack of 'Lord' cigarettes at 1,000

denars, whereas the new price is 2,000 denars. Malversations with cigarettes for export could be the work of exporters. After crossing our border, they come back across fields, in tractors, trucks, and other types of locomotion, having declared a given item, while secretly bringing back cigarette cartons. The same method is applied for other cigarettes now being sold illegally on our markets but procured from the former Yugoslav republics. No other interpretation is possible in the case of the current illegal sale of 'Boss' and other brands."

Financial Police

Makedonijatabak is concerned about the black market in cigarettes spreading in our country and how it can be blocked faster and in its entirety. The more so since the consequences of such illegal trade are directly felt in the regular sale of cigarettes and the reduced sales in business establishments. The tobacco enterprises are also insisting on such a solution.

One of the ways to achieve this is the establishment of a financial police with a system of quotas for cigarettes. More specifically, this should involve issuing cigarette sale certificates and quotas.

So far, the Ministry of Economics has not said a single word or given any thought to introducing such a system of quotas for cigarettes. According to Kole Spasovski, this would not be necessary if we bear in mind the annual cigarette production. A financial police may be required since they would be able to communicate with and supervise the factories, the commercial enterprises, and the other economic entities engaged in such activities. However, it is obvious that in order to put an end to the black market, stricter control of border crossings is necessary along with a more thorough checking of all imports and of items shipped. Be that as it may, it is a fact that in order to combat the black market, solutions must be found, for otherwise all of us, the state above all, are the losers. This was confirmed by the illegal trade during the summer months last year, when the state treasury lost more than 20 million German marks. This is not a small sum, when we know that just as much was lost from the black marketeering of alcohol and other goods which were of interest and considered profitable by the black-market trade.

[Box, p 3]

Unjustified Accusations

The news from Prague that four trucks loaded with "Peer" and "Rodeo" cigarettes in from Macedonia had been confiscated in the Czech Republic greatly angered the Makedonijatabak personnel. In this action, described as "the major affair with cigarettes", the name of their company was mentioned. It is true that the cigarettes were produced in Macedonia but Makedonijatabak had nothing to do with this so-called black market deal, according to Danco Suturkov. The cigarettes were sold to the interested purchasers outside Macedonia, and as to how they reached the Czech Republic, this should be the concern of the local authorities. It is true that in the past we have sold "Peer"

and "Rodeo" cigarettes and other brands requested by customers in Bulgaria, Poland, and other countries, from where they could be easily reexported to the Czech Republic. It is inappropriate for Makedonijatabak to be involved in such games, on the one hand, because of the reputation it has developed as a solid business partner and, on the other, because this is a petty deal that, in international trade, is the equivalent of a single truck of Marlboro cigarettes that are being sold on a daily basis in large quantities and are imported through black-market channels from the United States to the Czech Republic. This is similar to the resale and trade in our country of various farm products bought in one country and reexported through an entirely different country. This must become a concern for our state.

—by Borjana Dicevska

[Box, p 3]

Cigarettes Fictitiously Cross the Border

The main factor which helps the cigarette black market is that they fictitiously leave the borders of our Republic. Thus, for example, in the case of cigarettes purchased from domestic producers, no commercial tax is levied, for they will be sold in the importing country. After the proper check by the Skopje customs service, the loaded barges are sealed and issued an export declaration. On behalf of the customs service, from Skopje the trucks are accompanied by the

shippers who must accompany the loaded trucks to the border. We were told about this by Dimitar Beldedovski from the Skopje customs office, who also told us that once the cigarettes have crossed the border, they are no longer the concern of our country. As to where the cigarettes exported from the Republic end up is a debatable question. The trucks are being reloaded in other vehicles and carts, in "no-man's land" and are taken back along various unofficial crossings, thus bypassing the regular control authorities.

If the same trucks return to our Republic, a declaration is signed at the border indicating that the same quantity of cigarettes is being returned, together with a special letter, to the Makedonija Tabak stores. After delivery, a document is issued that the cigarettes were returned and delivered to their warehouses and registered as goods not subject to taxation.

In the case of foreign cigarettes, it is claimed that they are being purchased from some of the numerous open free shops at the border crossings. Since there is a government resolution, goods sold in the special customs stores are subject to a sales tax. This makes them much more expensive than those sold at the border crossing points. It is thus that Marlboro, Camel, and other types of expensive cigarettes can be purchased at half price, paid for in foreign currency, and resold on the Skopje markets.

—by S.K.

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